

***Cur Deus Homo?* The Implications of the Doctrine of  
the Incarnation for a Theological Understanding of  
the Relationship between Humans and Non-human  
Animals.**

**Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the**

**University of Chester for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**by Kristopher James Hiuser**

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### **Declaration**

I declare that the material presented for examination here is my own work and has not been submitted for an award at this or another Higher Education institution.

## **Contents**

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	
Introduction	4
Literature Review	5
Rationales	17
Methodology	20
Synopsis	28
<b>1. Anselm of Canterbury and Sin</b>	
Introduction	32
Aesthetic Cosmology	33
Sin	45
Redemption	66
Conclusion	76
<b>2. Gregory of Nyssa and the Image of God</b>	
Introduction	79
Why God became Incarnate	81
The Image of God	87
The Irrational Aspect of Humanity	100
Conclusion	115
<b>3. Maximus the Confessor and Microcosmic Constitution</b>	
Introduction	118
Creative Cosmology	119
Incarnation	138
Deification	146
Conclusion	152

#### **4. Karl Barth and Representative Covenant Partnership**

Introduction	155
Covenantal Theology	157
Representation	173
Ethics and Representation	184
Conclusion	194

#### **Conclusion**

Review of Findings	196
Potential Concerns	202
Implications for Theology	206
Moving Forward	208

<b>Bibliography</b>	210
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*Cur Deus Homo?* The Implications of the Doctrine of the Incarnation for a Theological Understanding of the Relationship between Humans and Non-human Animals.

by Kristopher James Hiuser

Abstract

This thesis examines the doctrine of the incarnation with particular attention to the implications of this doctrine for a theological understanding of human/nonhuman relationships. To do so, it is guided by two driving questions: Why did God become human in particular in the incarnation?, and what are the implications of the humanity of Christ for the way in which Christian theology construes the human/nonhuman relationship? Each chapter is guided by these questions, and seeks to find and test the answers given by four major theologians from the Christian tradition: Anselm of Canterbury and sin, Gregory of Nyssa and the image of God, Maximus the Confessor and the human constitution as microcosm, and Karl Barth and the human calling to be a representative covenantal partner. Through the use of the guiding questions, and engagement with these four theologians and their respective answers, three theses are developed over the course of the dissertation. First, that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human to include the nonhuman creature. Of the various reasons put forward throughout this thesis, each of them is shown to include the nonhuman animal in some way. Second, that God became human in particular due to the unique human calling to be a representative creature. In arriving at this conclusion, various viewpoints are considered and ultimately rejected as being sufficient to account for God's will to become human in particular. Third, the unique human calling of representation is shown to carry with it ethical implications for humans with regards to nonhuman animals. Given the human calling of representing creation to God, and God to creation, there are necessary ethical implications which such a calling has for what it means to be human.

## Introduction

The incarnation is a key feature of Christian doctrine that has had radical implications for how human/nonhuman<sup>1</sup> relationships have been construed. God's choice to become human in particular has repeatedly been used throughout the Christian tradition to distinguish between the creature that God willed to become, against those He did not. This is not to suggest that such distinctions should not be made; indeed as I will argue in this dissertation there is good reason for doing so. Often, however, in various ways the Christian tradition has used the incarnation to distinguish between human and nonhuman and carried with such a distinction either a negative view towards nonhuman creatures, or results in their being theologically ignored. As this thesis will explore, there are various ways this has occurred, yet one example illustrates this tendency clearly. David Clough demonstrates a way in which the nonhuman is often ignored in his book *On Animals*: 'God became human. Not only that, but God became human in order to overcome human sinful disobedience and reconcile Godself with humanity: the choice of creature in which to become incarnate – human; the cause of the ill that needed remedying – human; and the beneficiaries of the divine act of incarnation and atonement – human.'<sup>2</sup> In this example Clough notes the suggestion that God's incarnation as a human was motivated by the failings of a single type of creature, and God's desire to redeem that same single type of creature.<sup>3</sup> In such accounts all other types of creatures are often relegated to lacking theological significance or even a theological presence.

The aim of this thesis is to examine the particular way in which different theologians have answered the question 'why did God become human?' and to use their answers as a fruitful means of studying how Christian theology deals with the relationship between human and nonhuman creatures. God's choice to become incarnate as a human is at the centre of theological understandings of the relationship between human and non-human, and so this is

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this thesis, I use the term 'nonhuman animal' rather than just 'animal' when referring to earthly creatures other than humans. This is done because humans are themselves animals, sharing with other earthly creatures all manner of fleshly existence, and to highlight such a shared creaturely existence that humans have with nonhuman animals, a fact that is often disguised when humans are not expressed to be animals at all. For more on this see Deane-Drummond, Celia and David Clough, 'Introduction' in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 2. London: SCM Press, 2009; and Clough, David. *On Animals: Vol. 1 Systematic Theology*. London: T&T Clark, 2012, xv-xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, 81.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that not all have viewed God's incarnation as a human in particular as necessarily descriptive of a particular merit or superiority on the part of humans. C.S. Lewis ('Religion and Rocketry' in *Fern Seed and Elephants*, edited by Walter Hooper. London: Fontana (1975), 88) for instance suggests that God's incarnation as a human to redeem humans implies the very opposite.



a crucial area to explore the human/non-human relationship. This aim will be guided by two questions. First, why in the incarnation did God will to become human in particular, rather than any other creature? Second, what are the implications of the humanity of Christ for the way in which Christian theology construes human/nonhuman relationships? These guiding questions, motivating the four main chapters of this thesis, will allow for an examination of four major ways in which the Christian tradition has understood God's will to become human in particular, what implications the answers have for the human/nonhuman relationship, and enable four theologians from across the Christian tradition to be brought together to contribute meaningfully on a new approach to the doctrine of the incarnation which engages with the topic of the nonhuman.

## Literature Review

As noted above, the aim of this thesis is to examine how understandings of the doctrine of the incarnation impact the inclusion of nonhuman animals within such accounts, and what the results of such engagements have for understanding human/nonhuman relationships. Although this thesis is a systematic theology of the doctrine of the incarnation, it also operates within a specific field which has emerged within Christian studies that has become known as animal theology.<sup>4</sup> Below, I will briefly survey this subject area to both provide an overview of what has been done, as well as to demonstrate that the topic of this thesis is one which seeks to fill a gap in the work done thus far.

Though a focus on nonhuman animals as a theological topic in its own right did not really come to the fore until the 1980s and 1990s, authors have discussed nonhuman animals within their theological writings in various forms in preceding centuries. Examples from the 18<sup>th</sup> century include Bishop Joseph Butler's book *The Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature*,<sup>5</sup> John Hildrop's *Free Thoughts Upon the Brute Creation*,<sup>6</sup> Humphry Primatt's *Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty*

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'animal theology' is one commonly used in reference to any theological account of the nonhuman animal. Given the common use of this term, I have chosen to retain it rather than using my preferred choice of 'nonhuman animal' when discussing this theological movement.

<sup>5</sup> Butler, Joseph. *The Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature*. London: George Routledge and Sons, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1887, 12-21. Extract in *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Tom Regan, 88-90. London: SPCK, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> Hildrop, John. *Free Thoughts Upon the Brute Creation, Or, an Examination of Father Bougeant's Philosophical Amusement, &c.: In Two Letters to a Lady*. London: R. Minors, 1742.

to Brute Animals,<sup>7</sup> and Richard Dean's *An Essay on the Future Life of Brute Creatures*.<sup>8</sup> In many cases, the topic of discussion in such works was either a theologically-based ethical treatment of nonhuman animals, or proposing the idea of immortality for nonhuman creatures. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century John Wesley preached a sermon in which he discussed and described nonhuman animal redemption, and Cardinal Henry Manning, a co-founder of the world's first anti-vivisection society, gave a speech to the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection in which he discussed what we owe God in terms of our treatment of nonhuman animals.<sup>9</sup> The early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century saw Albert Schweitzer propose his 'reverence for life' ethic, in which all creatures are worthy of ethical concern,<sup>10</sup> and C.S. Lewis wrote on nonhuman animals, their theological value, and human ethical treatment of them.<sup>11</sup> Then, in the 1970s there began an interest in the moral and theological significance of the nonhuman that would grow increasingly influential. Publications by the philosophers Peter Singer<sup>12</sup> and Stephen Clark,<sup>13</sup> and theologian Andrew Linzey,<sup>14</sup> brought the topic of nonhuman animals into academic discussion. From the 1980s onward, the theological interest in the topic of the nonhuman has increased dramatically, with an increasing number of books being written on the topic of animals and Christian theology.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Primatt, Humphry. *Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals*. London: R. Hett, 1776.

<sup>8</sup> Dean, Richard. *An Essay on the Future Life of Brute Creatures*. London: G. Kearsly, 1768.

<sup>9</sup> Wesley, John. 'The Great Deliverance.' In *The Works of Rev. John Wesley*, Vol. 9, edited by John Wesley and Joseph Benson, 189-203. London: Conference Office, 1811; Manning, Henry Edward. 'Speech to the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection', March 9, 1887. In *Speeches against Vivisection*. London: National Anti-vivisection Society and the Catholic Study Circle for the Welfare of Animals, 1977. Extract in *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings*, Andrew Linzey and Tom Regan, 165-66. London: SPCK, 1988.

<sup>10</sup> Schweitzer, Albert. *Civilization and Ethics* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, chapter 21. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1949.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S. 'Animal Pain.' In *The Problem of Pain*, 106-18. London: Fount Harper Collins, 1998; 'Vivisection.' In *God in the Dock*, edited by Walter Hooper, 224-228. Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans Publishing, 1970.

<sup>12</sup> Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for our Treatment of Animals*. New York: Random House, 1975.

<sup>13</sup> Clark, Stephen. *The Moral Status of Animals*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.

<sup>14</sup> Linzey, Andrew. *Animal Rights: A Christian Perspective*. London: SCM Press, 1976.

<sup>15</sup> See for example Linzey, Andrew. *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*. London: SPCK, 1987; Linzey, Andrew. *Animal Theology*. London: SCM Press, 1994; Linzey, Andrew, and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. London: Mowbray, 1997; Linzey, Andrew, and Dorothy Yamamoto (eds). *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*. London: SCM Press, 1998; Barad, Judith. *Aquinas on the Nature and Treatment of Animals*. San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1995; Webb, Stephen. *Of God and Pelicans: Theology of Reverence for Life*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989; Webb, Stephen. *On God and Dogs: A Christian Theology of Compassion for Animals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; Regenstein, Lewis G. *Replenish the Earth: A History of Organized Religion's Treatment of Animals and Nature – Including the Bible's Message of Conservation and Kindness to Animals*. London: SCM Press, 1991; Birch, Charles, and Lukas Vischer. *Living with the Animals: The Community of God's Creatures*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997; Eaton, John. *The Circle of Creation: Animals in the Light of the Bible*. London: SCM Press, 1995; Fox, Michael J. *The Boundless Circle: Caring for Creatures and Creation*. Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1996.

As interest in nonhumans within theology grew, so too did the range of ways they were studied and included within theological discussions. Such a broad range can be illustrated through the way the topic of the nonhuman has been approached in theological edited works on the topic of nonhuman animals. Two examples illustrate this. *Animals on the Agenda*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto is broken up into four main parts: ‘Understanding Scriptural Perspectives’ (where nonhuman animals fit in the Bible), ‘Wrestling with the Tradition’ (what the Christian tradition has said regarding nonhuman animals), ‘Disputed Questions’ (topics such as nonhuman animal fallenness or their possession of an eternal soul), and ‘Obligations to Animals’ (possible ethical requirements on the part of humans towards nonhumans). *Creaturely Theology*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough and published just over 20 years after *Animals on the Agenda* is broken into five parts: ‘Historical Approaches’, ‘Systematic Approaches’, ‘Hermeneutical Approaches’, ‘The Moral Status of Animals’, and ‘Ecological Perspectives’. These examples demonstrate that the topic of the nonhuman within theology is addressed through a wide range of approaches. Though there is overlap in these varied choices of dividing up the topics (e.g. examining how nonhuman animals have historically been understood), they are for the main part distinct. Below, I shall provide an overview of what has occurred within the past few decades regarding animal theology, picking out common topics of discussion, themes, and approaches.

The work of those writing animal theology can perhaps most simply be broken down into two main categories: authors seeking better to understand either the nonhuman creature, or the human relation to the nonhuman. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive categories, yet they provide a means of examining what has been done to date. Within the first category, there are three main approaches that have been taken; use of the Bible, use of the tradition, and use of modern scientific understandings of nonhuman animals. In the second category, there are different models of relationship which have been suggested, including rights-based language as well as examinations into particular ethical issues which arise in common human/nonhuman interactions (e.g. the nonhuman as sources of food or clothing for humans). Dividing relevant works in this way will enable an overview of what

has been done to date with regards to a theology of the nonhuman animal, and will also illustrate the specific area where this thesis intends to fill a gap in the literature.

The first source used to better understand the human creature theologically is the Bible. Common sources within the Bible are the creation narratives, biblical descriptions of a cosmic Fall, verses describing or implying nonhuman animal redemption, and eschatological verses which often cover most of these. The creation narratives, along with their eschatological significance (all creation living in peace, a vegetarian diet throughout) are often used to define and describe God's original intent for creatures (both human and nonhuman). Here, the nonhuman is frequently shown to be distinguished from the vegetative creation, and sharing many elements in common with humans, including having the same 'breath of life' as well as sharing in the same vegetarian diet.<sup>16</sup> Many theologians who have taken special interest in nonhuman animals also take up the idea of a cosmic Fall which impacted the whole of creation.<sup>17</sup> This idea is further examined by attempts to address the topic of nonhuman animal suffering, and the recognition that a successful theodicy will need to account for their suffering as well.<sup>18</sup> In addition, a large amount of work has been done on the topic of nonhuman animal redemption and the eschatological verses which depict their presence in a redeemed creation.<sup>19</sup> Though there is a wide acceptance *that* nonhuman animals

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<sup>16</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, 31-40; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 31-36; Barth, Karl. *Barth, Karl. Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 4*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by A.T. Mackay et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961, 348. On the topic of nonhuman animal souls, see Badham, Paul. 'Do Animals have Immortal Souls?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 181-89. London: SCM Press, 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Ickert, Scott. 'Luther and Animals: Subject to Adam's Fall?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 90-99. London: SCM Press, 1998; Clark, Stephen R.L. 'Is Nature God's Will?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 123-36. London: SCM Press, 1998; Lloyd, Michael. 'Are Animals Fallen?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 147-160. London: SCM Press, 1998; Hyland, J. R. *God's Covenant with Animals: A Biblical Basis for the Humane Treatment of All Creatures*. Herndon: Lantern Books, 2000; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 84-89; Clough, *On Animals*, 105-26; Linzey, Andrew. 'Unfinished Creation: The Moral and Theological Significance of the Fall.' *Ecotheology* 4 (1998) 20-26. For an approach to animal theology which rejects the Fall, see Southgate, Christopher. *The Groaning of Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil*. London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Webb, Stephen. *Of God and Pelicans: Theology of Reverence for Life*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989; Wennberg, Robert N., *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe*, 309-41. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003; Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*; McDaniel, Jay B. 'Can Animal Suffering be Reconciled with Belief in an All-Loving God?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 161-72. London: SCM Press, 1998.

<sup>19</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, 104-53; Young, Richard Alan. *Is God a Vegetarian?: Christianity, Vegetarianism, and Animal Rights*. Chicago: Open Court, 1999, 140-152; Gibbs, John. *Creation and Redemption*. Leiden: E.G. Brill, 1971; Linzey, Andrew, and Tom Regan. *The Question of Animal Redemption*. London: SPCK, 1989; Bauckham, Richard. 'Jesus and Animals II: What did he Practise?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 49-60. London: SCM Press, 1998; Clark, 'Is Nature God's Will?', 123-36; Cobb, John B. Jr. 'All Things in Christ?' In *Animals on the*

will be redeemed in some way, how this is achieved through God's incarnation, death, and resurrection has not been the topic of any detailed study. The main way suggested, as will be detailed below, is through God taking on flesh in the incarnation, flesh being something which all earthly creatures possess. The particularity of God's choice to become incarnate as a human however, is generally left undiscussed in such accounts. Beyond these topics, there is also a wide range of ways in which the Bible is used to further theologically depict nonhuman creatures. Other biblical sources used to determine the theological place of the nonhuman include their scriptural presence as sacrifices,<sup>20</sup> food,<sup>21</sup> pets,<sup>22</sup> their status as wild and domestic,<sup>23</sup> as loved and cared for by God,<sup>24</sup> or as clean and unclean.<sup>25</sup> There has even

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*Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 173-80. London: SCM Press, 1998; Willey, Petroc and Eldred Willey. 'Will Animals be Redeemed?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 190-200. London: SCM Press, 1998; Edwards, Denis. 'The Redemption of Animals in an Incarnational Theology.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 81-99. London: SCM Press, 2009; Northcott, Michael. 'They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain' (Isaiah 65.25): Killing for Philosophy and a Creaturely Theology of Non-violence.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 231-248. London: SCM Press, 2009; Webb, Stephen. *On God and Dogs: A Christian Theology of Compassion for Animals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, 155-80; Edwards, Denis. 'Every Sparrow that Falls to the Ground' *Ecotheology*, 11.1 (2006) 103-23; Northcott, 'Do Dolphins Carry the Cross?', 540-53; Green, Michael. 'The Scope of the Cosmic Christ.' In *Grace and Truth in the Secular Age*, edited by Timothy Bradshaw, 3-14. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998; Gibson, Michael D. 'The Beauty of the Redemption of the World.' *Harvard Theological Review* 101.1 (2008) 45-76; Kirkpatrick, Martha. "'For God So Loved the World": An Incarnational Ecology.' *Anglican Theological Review* 91.2 (2009) 191-212; McLaughlin, Ryan Patrick. *Christian Theology and the Status of Animals: The Dominant Tradition and Its Alternatives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 96-113; Quinn, Edward. 'Animals in Heaven?' *New Blackfriars* 65.767 (1984) 224-25.

<sup>20</sup> Berry, Malinda Elizabeth. 'What about Animal Sacrifice in the Hebrew Scriptures?' In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 23-38. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Rogerson, J.W. 'What was the Meaning of Animal Sacrifice?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 8-17. London: SCM Press, 1998.

<sup>21</sup> The topic of nonhuman animals as food, both within the Bible and out of it, is discussed in further detail below.

<sup>22</sup> Hobgood-Oster, Laura. *The Friends We Keep: Unleashing Christianity's Compassion for Animals*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010, 24-36.

<sup>23</sup> Bauckham, 'Jesus and Animals II', 49-60; Person, Raymond F. Jr. 'Your Wives, Your Children, and Your Livestock': Domesticated Beings as Religious Objects in the Book of Deuteronomy.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 227-42. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> Hoskinski, Thomas E. 'How Does God's Providential Care Extend to Animals?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 137-46. London: SCM Press, 1998; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 95-97; Clough, 'The Anxiety of the Human Animal', 50-53; Bauckham, 'Jesus and Animals I', 33-48; Clough, *On Animals*, 36-40; Greenfield, 'Humans, Animals and a Theology of Relationship', 34; Hiuser and Barton, 'A promise is a promise', 348-50; Shemesh, Yael. "'And Many Beasts" (Jonah 4:11): The Function and Status of Animals in the Book of Jonah.' *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, 10 (2010) 23-25.

<sup>25</sup> Houston, Walter. 'What was the Meaning of Classifying Animals as Clean or Unclean?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 18-24. London: SCM Press, 1998; Douglas, Mary. 'The Compassionate God of Leviticus and His Animal Creation.' In *Borders, Boundaries and the Bible*, edited by Michael O'Kane. London: Sheffield Academic Press (2002), 61-73; Douglas, Mary. 'The Forbidden Animals in Leviticus.' *Journal for the Study of the Old*

been minimal work done in determining what individual books of the Bible have to say regarding nonhuman animals.<sup>26</sup> Each of these theological topics are generally used to illustrate how the nonhuman animal is to be theologically conceived, and such conceptions highlight in one way or another, the value of the nonhuman.

An additional way animal theology has been examined is through the study of the Christian tradition. There are three main ways the topic has been approached.<sup>27</sup> First, in line with the eschatological images detailed in the Bible, there are many hagiographies which include nonhuman animals that have been used to suggest ways to understand the nonhuman.<sup>28</sup> Nonhumans are often shown to be at peace with the saints, and it is this existence which is suggested to be normative for creaturely existence. The second source of information is the writings of a wide range of theologians of the past regarding the nature and status of nonhuman animals.<sup>29</sup> While the majority of work details how various past theologians provide useful ways of meaningfully including nonhuman animals within theological discussion, especially in ways which bespeak their value, there are also those calling into questions propositions which are seen as neglectful or unhelpful in construing a

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*Testament* 59 (1993), 3-23; Grumett, David, and Rachel Muers. 'Clean and unclean animals.' In *Theology on the Menu: Asceticism, Meat and Christian Diet*, 72-88. New York: Routledge, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> Shemesh, "'And Many Beasts'", 2-26; Hiuser, Kris. 'Animals in Jonah.' *The Ark Journal of Catholic Concern for Animals*. 225 (2013) 20-23.

<sup>27</sup> For a recent detailed examination of the moral standing of nonhuman animals within the Christian tradition, including the various approaches within the tradition towards them, see McLaughlin, *Christian Theology and the Status of Animals*.

<sup>28</sup> Waddell, Helen. *Beasts and Saints*. Toronto: Longmans Green and Company, 1953; Hobgood-Oster, Laura. *The Friends We Keep: Unleashing Christianity's Compassion for Animals*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010, 26-30, 69-70, 125; Murray, Robert. *The Cosmic Covenant*. London: Sheed & Ward, 1992, 146-47; Briere, Elizabeth. 'Creation, Incarnation, and Transfiguration: Material Creation and Our Understanding of it.' *Sobornost*, 11.1-2 (1989), 36.

<sup>29</sup> Clark, Gillian. 'The Fathers and the Animals: The Rule of Reason?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 67-79. London: SCM Press, 1998; Yamamoto, Dorothy. 'Aquinas and Animals: Patrolling the Boundary?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 80-89. London: SCM Press, 1998; Ickert, Scott. 'Luther and Animals: Subject to Adam's Fall?' In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 90-99. London: SCM Press, 1998; Berkman, 'Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality', 21-40; Clough, David. 'The Anxiety of the Human Animal: Martin Luther on Non-human Animals and Human Animality.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 41-60. London: SCM Press, 2009; Barad, Judith. *Aquinas on the Nature and Treatment of Animals*. San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1995; Barad, Judith. 'Aquinas' Inconsistency on the Nature and the Treatment of Animals.' *Between the Species* 4.2 (1988) 102-11; Meyer, Eric Daryl. 'Marvel at the Intelligence of Unthinking Creatures: Contemplative Animals in Gregory of Nazianzus and Evagrius of Pontus.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 191-208. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Linzey, Andrew. *The Neglected Creature: The Doctrine of the Non-human and its Relationship with the Human in the Thought of Karl Barth*. Ph.D. diss. London: Kings College, 1986.

theology of nonhuman animals.<sup>30</sup> Finally, and connected to both of these, is the presence (or absence) of the nonhuman in the art and symbolism of the Christian tradition.<sup>31</sup> How nonhuman animals are portrayed in Christian visual depictions, what such presentations mean, and the implications these have for understanding them have all become a means of deepening our theological construction of the nonhuman animal. Each of these ways the Christian tradition have all been used not only produce a richer theological understanding of the nonhuman, but have also opened up how the Christian tradition has conceived of the nonhuman (for better or worse), and the implications this has had on how they have been understood historically.

A final source which those engaged in animal theology commonly use in order to understand the situation of nonhuman animals better are the findings of nonhuman animal science, particularly cognitive ethology studies.<sup>32</sup> Such interdisciplinary work is often done with the aim of critically engaging with more traditional theological presentations of nonhuman animals, where they are understood to be lacking in many of the capacities which humans possess. The goal of such work is to demonstrate that nonhuman animals possess the abilities which have traditionally been used to differentiate between humans and nonhumans theologically.<sup>33</sup> Some theologians suggest that rationality does not belong to humans alone, or

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<sup>30</sup> Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 12-19; Clough, *On Animals*, 3-25; Barad, 'Aquinas' Inconsistency', 102-11; Yamamoto, 'Aquinas and Animals', 80-89.

<sup>31</sup> Obermaier, Sabine. 'Hedgehog Skin and Golden Calf: Animals as Symbols for Paganism in Medieval German Literature.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 81-102. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Dodd, Adam. 'The Daemonic Insect: *Mantis religiosa*.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 103-24. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Gilhus, Ingvald Sælid. 'From Sacrifices to Symbols: Animals in Late Antiquity and Early Christianity.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 149-166. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Muers, Rachel. 'The Animals We Write On: Encountering Animals in Texts.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 138-50. London: SCM Press, 2009; Reed, 'Animals in Orthodox Iconography', 61-77.

<sup>32</sup> Of particular note in the subject of cognitive ethology is the work of Marc Bekoff who has not only written a number of books on the subject of animal cognition and morality, but has to a large degree successfully brought the topics of animal cognition from the scientific realm into the realm of religion. Though not a theologian, his work has had such an impact on theology and religious studies in general that his work was the topic a joint session held at the American Academy of Religion conference in 2004. For the various papers presented, see *Zygon* 41.1 (2006).

<sup>33</sup> Reed, Esther D. 'Animals in Orthodox Iconography.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 69-76. London: SCM Press, 2009; Cunningham, David S. 'The Way of All Flesh: Rethinking the *Imago Dei*.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 100-17. London: SCM Press, 2009; Deane-Drummond, Celia. 'Are Animals Moral?', 207-10; Camosy, 'Other Animals as Persons? – A Roman Catholic Inquiry.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 268-77. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Miller, Daniel. 'Responsible Relationship: *Imago Dei* and the Moral Distinction between Humans and Other Animals.'

at the very least, it exists on a spectrum of ability, rather than being an absolute which creatures either possess or lack.<sup>34</sup> In the work of others, the claims of human uniqueness with regards to morality,<sup>35</sup> or even for religious experience,<sup>36</sup> are called into question. Such discussions sometimes take place within engagements regarding other theological concepts, such as the image of God, in which reason has long acted as a defining feature. Ultimately these examinations illustrate an attempt to understand who nonhuman animals are, and more specifically, what they might be capable of. This is in no small part motivated by the desire to better understand how humans and nonhumans are different, and how they are similar. Though there are certainly many views within animal theology, an underlying assumption is that there are fewer distinctions between human and nonhuman than have traditionally been proposed.

In addition to researching who and what nonhuman animals are, a significant amount of work has been done, often based on such research, in describing and defining the way in which humans are to relate to nonhuman animals. Here again, the Bible and the Christian tradition are sources frequently used to describe how humans should be in relation to nonhuman animals. Often, the creation narratives (e.g. Gen. 1:29 which describes all creation as vegetarian), as well the latter eschatological narratives (e.g. Isaiah 11:6-9 which depicts all creation in peace) are used to describe what the ideal state of existence is, and thus, what

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*International Journal of Systematic Theology* 13.3 (2011) 323-39; Putz, Oliver. 'Moral Apes, Human Uniqueness, and the Image of God.' *Zygon* 44.3 (2009) 613-24.

<sup>34</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, 72-73; Berkman, John. 'Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 29-40. London: SCM Press, 2009; Messer, Neil. 'Humans, Animals, Evolution and Ends.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 214-16. London: SCM Press, 2009; Deane-Drummond, Celia. 'Are Animals Moral? Taking Soundings through Vice, Virtue, Conscience and *Imago Dei*.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 190-210. London: SCM Press, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Deane-Drummond, Celia. 'Are Animals Moral? Taking Soundings through Vice, Virtue, Conscience and *Imago Dei*.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals* edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, 190-210. London: SCM Press, 2009; Deane-Drummond, Celia. *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom*. London, SCM Press, 2009, 161-170; Deane-Drummond, Celia. 'Are Animals Moral?' *Zygon* 44.4 (2009) 932-50; Putz, 'Moral Apes, Human Uniqueness, and the Image of God', 613-24. For a view which rejects the moral capacity of nonhuman animals, yet does so within the realm of animal theology, see Miller, Daniel. *Animal Ethics and Theology: The Lens of the Good Samaritan*. New York: Routledge, 2012, 20-33.

<sup>36</sup> Ingold, Tim. 'Walking with Dragons: An Anthropological Excursion on the Wild Side.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 35-58. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Gross, Aaron. 'The Study of Religion after the Animal.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 59-78. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Clark, Stephen R.L. 'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 15-34. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.



humans should now aim for.<sup>37</sup> There has been particular emphasis placed on the creation narratives for understanding the human calling to dominion and its impact on understanding the human relation to the nonhuman creation.<sup>38</sup> In such cases there is a constant rejection of the idea that ‘dominion’ allows humans to treat nonhuman animals any way they wish; instead they are to be treated with care and concern. At other times there is more focus on the New Testament regarding how humans are to treat nonhuman animals.<sup>39</sup> Here, as in the broader study of the uses of nonhuman animals within the Bible (e.g. as sacrifices), there is an attempt to not reject the more ‘difficult’ biblical passages (e.g. where Jesus eats fish, or sends demons into a herd of swine which are then destroyed), but to incorporate such perspectives into a theology of nonhuman animal care and concern. In addition, the hagiographies noted above are also used as an illustration of the ideal state of existence (with the saint living in peace with all creatures) which can act as models for normative Christian thinking on the matter.

Given such resources, there are a number of ways that have been put forward to understand the human relation to nonhuman animals. One of these, dominion, was noted above. Here there has been a steady move away from understanding humans as possessing the authority to do as they please, to understanding such dominion in light of God and Christ, with an elevated position descriptive of a calling to serve rather than to be served.<sup>40</sup> This idea has been further nuanced by understanding humans as having a priestly role within creation, with a calling to act sacrificially, again based on the life of Christ.<sup>41</sup> Yet there are also other

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<sup>37</sup> Young, *Is God a Vegetarian?*, 15-27; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 125-137; Linzey, Andrew, and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. London: Mowbray, 1997, 17-20, 56-59.

<sup>38</sup> Adams, Carol J. ‘What about Dominion in Genesis?’ In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 1-12. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 113-33; Clough, ‘The Anxiety of the Human Animal’, 42-49; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 34; Jones, John D., ‘Humans and Animals: Compassion and Dominion,’ *Anglican Theological Review*, 62.3 (1981) 259-72; Spanner, Huw. ‘Tyrants, Stewards – or Just Kings?’ In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 222-24. London: SCM Press, 1998; Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 113-43.

<sup>39</sup> Webb, Stephen H. ‘Didn’t Jesus Eat Lamb? The Last Supper and the Case of the Missing Meat.’ In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 53-63. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Alexis-Baker, Andy. ‘Didn’t Jesus Eat Fish?’ In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 64-74. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Loyd-Paige Michelle. ‘Doesn’t Romans Say that Vegetarians Have “Weak Faith”?’ In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 90-100. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Spalde, Annika and Pelle Strindlund. ‘Doesn’t Jesus Treat Animals as Property?’ In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 101-13. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Fox, *The Boundless Circle*; 35-60, 112-15.

<sup>40</sup> See note 22 above.

<sup>41</sup> Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 45-61.

suggestions which have been put forward regarding the most useful way of understanding human/nonhuman relations. Laura Hobgood-Oster in her book *The Friends We Keep*, suggests a model based around hospitality.<sup>42</sup> Focusing on scriptural examples of hospitality, as well as hagiographies, Hobgood-Oster proposes that hospitality is a highly useful way of understanding the human relation to animals (as well as the calling to dominion). Another model has been put forward by Daniel Miller in his book *Animal Ethics and Theology*. He suggests placing nonhuman animals in the category of neighbour, and bases his model off of the parable of the Good Samaritan.<sup>43</sup> Again, such a model is used to make sense of the calling to dominion, as well as proscribing ethical treatment of nonhuman animals, such as not eating their flesh. These models are attempts to explain a way through which we can conceive of the human relation to the nonhuman, and provide general guidelines through which to proceed in this relationship. Other models of human/nonhuman relationship, especially ones which focus on the duties humans have towards nonhumans, are found in the work of those propounding theological rights on behalf of nonhuman animals, or more generally for ethical consideration for them.

Work within animal theology using rights-based language can be divided into three groups: those that support it, those that reject it, and those who are somewhat critical, yet are willing to use it within a larger ethical framework. While there have been a number of books or chapters devoted to describing or constructing a theologically-orientated nonhuman animal rights framework,<sup>44</sup> the most sustained attention to this is found in the work of Andrew Linzey and his concept of theos-rights.<sup>45</sup> For Linzey, such rights are ultimately based not upon the individual creatures, but upon God: ‘God is the source of rights, and indeed, the whole debate about animals is precisely about the rights of the Creator.’<sup>46</sup> It is this very basis

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<sup>42</sup> Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 113-43.

<sup>43</sup> Miller (*Animal Ethics and Theology*, 102) is himself somewhat critical of Hobgood-Oster’s concept of ‘hospitality’ for ‘it implies that the other (in this case the animal) does not normally belong here with us. It assumes that the earth rightly belongs to humans and we must accommodate other animals that are consequently viewed as guests or, worse, intruders.’ However, a similar criticism might be made against the ‘neighbor’ concept itself.

<sup>44</sup> Phelps, Norman. *The Dominion of Love: Animal Rights According to the Bible*. Herndon: Lantern Books, 2002; Yarri, Donna. *The Ethics of Animal Experimentation: A Critical Analysis and Constructive Christian Proposal*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, ch. 4-5; Jones, Deborah M. *The School of Compassion: A Roman Catholic Theology of Animals*, 244-56.

<sup>45</sup> Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 3-25; Linzey, Andrew. *Animal Gospel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998, 33-41; Linzey, Andrew. ‘The Theological Basis of Animal Rights.’ *Christian Century* 108 (1991) 906-09.

<sup>46</sup> Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 40.

(among others) which caused some to react against the notion of rights.<sup>47</sup> One criticism offered against rights-based language is that ‘rights language presupposes an antagonistic or competitive environment between individuals.’<sup>48</sup> Such a basis of hostility is not one that all accept, with some scholars using other models such as hospitality or neighbourliness noted above, or focusing upon a more general basis in relationship.<sup>49</sup> Then there are those who posit themselves somewhere in the middle, suggesting that while there are certainly issues with rights-based language regarding the nonhuman, it is not without its benefit.<sup>50</sup> Richard Alan Young suggests a move from ‘functioning under a rule-based ethic to functioning under a character-based ethic that is shaped by the biblical narrative’ where rights offer guidelines, rather than strict rules.<sup>51</sup> Miller suggests that theologically orientated rights are ‘based more fundamentally on care and relationship’, but that the best place where rights language might work is with regard to wild nonhuman animals.<sup>52</sup> However one takes the idea of rights, they exist within the broader area of ethics towards nonhuman animals, and these topics, with or without necessitating discussion of rights, are commonly found throughout animal theology.

The discussion of ethical regard towards nonhuman animals is often directed at specific areas which these creatures are commonly involved in, such as their inclusion in food production, scientific research, hunting, clothing production, and entertainment.<sup>53</sup> Of these, the inclusion of nonhuman animals within food production and the proper ethical human response to such a system are perhaps the most common.<sup>54</sup> Alike to most topics discussed so

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<sup>47</sup> Richard Wade for instance (Wade, Richard. ‘Animal Theology and Ethical Concerns’ *Australian eJournal of Theology* 2 (2004) 3-4) is critical of Linzey’s theos-rights for falling outside of normal rights-based language, and suggests he instead is operating on a more traditional indirect duty ethic.

<sup>48</sup> Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 84.

<sup>49</sup> Greenfield, Trevor. ‘Humans, Animals and a Theology of Relationship.’ *Modern Believing* 45. 1 (2004) 32-40. See also Webb, *On God and Dogs*, 38-68 for a critical view regarding rights language, and Webb, Steven H. ‘The Chicken and the Bath Water: Exploring a Basic Limit to the Vegetarian Ideal.’ *The Expository Times* 123.12 (2012) 573-80, for a particular criticism of a rights-based capacity to address certain ethical quandaries. See also Celia Deane-Dummond (*Genetics and Christian Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 228-44), who suggests the framework of friendship.

<sup>50</sup> Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 119-79; Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 75-88.

<sup>51</sup> Young, *Is God A Vegetarian?*, 38.

<sup>52</sup> Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 86.

<sup>53</sup> For less specific discussions of the ethical responsibility of humans towards nonhumans, see Klug, Brian. ‘Can we See a Moral Question about Animals?’ In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 206-215. London: SCM Press, 1998; and Brett, Paul. ‘Compassion or Justice? What is our Minimum Ethical Obligation to Animals?’ In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 225-36. London: SCM Press, 1998; and Gaffney, James. ‘Can Catholic Morality Make Room for Animals?’ In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 100-12. London: SCM Press, 1998.

<sup>54</sup> See for instance Grumett, David, and Rachel Muers (eds.). *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*. London: T&T Clark, 2008; Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*; Webb, Stephen H. ‘Didn’t Jesus Eat Lamb? The Last Supper and the Case of the Missing Meat.’ In A

far, there are a range of ways in which the topics of nonhuman animals as food, and the resulting ethical issues for Christians, have been examined. These include (but are not limited to) biblical (examining both those which appear to support vegetarianism and those that do not),<sup>55</sup> historical (examining historical viewpoints, asceticism, hagiographies),<sup>56</sup> modern ethical issues with factory farming and vegetarianism,<sup>57</sup> along with more general theological discussion on the ethics of eating nonhuman animals.<sup>58</sup> It perhaps goes without saying that for theologians interested in animal theology, and the ethical response of the human towards them, the proscribed choice is a vegetarian diet, or at the very least a strong push away from industrial farming found commonly in modern food production. With regards to scientific

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*Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 53-63. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Alexis-Baker, Andy. 'Didn't Jesus Eat Fish?' In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 64-74. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Hobgood-Oster, Laura. 'Does Christian Hospitality Require that We Eat Meat?' In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 75-89. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Loyd-Paige Michelle. 'Doesn't Romans Say that Vegetarians Have "Weak Faith"?' In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 90-100. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Nussberger, Danielle. 'Vegetarianism: A Christian Spiritual Practice Both Old and New.' In *A Faith Embracing All Creatures: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Care for Animals*, edited by Tripp York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 166-79. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012; Young, *Is God a Vegetarian*; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 125-37; Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 116-23; Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 4*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by A.T. Mackay et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961, 351-55; Bazell, Dianne M. 'Strife among the Table-Fellows: Conflicting Attitudes of Early and Medieval Christians toward the Eating of Meat.' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65.1 (1997) 73-99; Tardiff, Andrew. 'A Catholic Case for Vegetarianism' *Faith and Philosophy* 15.2 (1998) 210-21; Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 134-64.

<sup>55</sup> MacDonald, Nathan. 'Food and Diet in the Priestly Material of the Pentateuch.' In *Eating and Believing*, 17-30; Horrell, David G. 'Biblical Vegetarianism? A Critical and Constructive Assessment.' In *Eating and Believing*, 44-59; Southgate, Christopher. 'Protological and Eschatological Vegetarianism.' In *Eating and Believing*, 247-65; Webb, 'Didn't Jesus Eat Lamb?', 53-63; Alexis-Baker, 'Didn't Jesus Eat Fish?', 64-74; Hobgood-Oster; 'Does Christian Hospitality Require that We Eat Meat?', 75-89; Loyd-Paige; 'Doesn't Romans Say that Vegetarians Have "Weak Faith"?', 90-100; Young, *Is God a Vegetarian*; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 125-37; Tardiff, 'A Catholic Case for Vegetarianism', 210-21.

<sup>56</sup> Grumett, David. 'Mosaic Food Rules in Celtic Spirituality in Ireland.' In *Eating and Believing*, 31-43; Shaw, Teresa M. 'Vegetarianism, Heresy, and Asceticism in Late Ancient Christianity.' In *Eating and Believing*, 75-95; Bazell, 'Strife among the Table-Fellows', 73-99; Nussberger, 'Vegetarianism', 166-79.

<sup>57</sup> Calvert, Samantha Jane. 'Ours is the Food that Eden Knew: Themes in the Theology and Practice of Modern Christian Vegetarians.' In *Eating and Believing*, 123-34; Jones, 'Humans and Animals', 265-266; Hiuser, Kris, and Matthew Barton. 'A promise is a promise: God's covenantal relationship with animals' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 67.3 (2014) 351-56; Jones, *The School of Compassion*, 257-58; Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 99-106; Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 95-112; Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 224-53; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 111-14, 141-48.

<sup>58</sup> Barth, *Church Dogmatics III/4*, 351-55; Miller, *Animal Ethics and Theology*, 134-64; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 125-37; Brown, David. 'Symbol, Community and Vegetarianism.' In *Eating and Believing*, 219-31; Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*; Young, *Is God a Vegetarian?*; Tardiff, 'A Catholic Case for Vegetarianism', 210-21.

research,<sup>59</sup> hunting and fur,<sup>60</sup> as well as entertainment,<sup>61</sup> the conclusions are likewise quite similar; rejecting the abuse and suffering of nonhuman animals as much as possible, especially in those areas which provide little objective value for humans (unlike, perhaps, within certain scientific uses of nonhuman animals).

This brief overview has detailed the work of theologians interested in the topic of nonhuman animals. Two broad categories were described, where the aim was to gain either a better theological understanding of the nonhuman creature, or to understand the proper human relationship with the nonhuman better. The first of these was sub-divided into its main sources; the Bible, the Christian tradition, and interdisciplinary work, while the second was sub-divided into various models of human/nonhuman relationships, rights-based discussions, and finally various common ethical topics. This thesis locates itself within the first broad category, seeking to examine the topic of the nonhuman animal, and does so within engagement of the Christian tradition. More specifically, I interact with various theologians and their writings on the doctrine of the incarnation, and how such writings make the inclusion of the nonhuman within this doctrine possible. Though primarily a doctrinal study, the subsequent implications which such a theology has for understanding the ethical requirements of the human/nonhuman relationship are briefly discussed.

## **Rationales**

The rationales behind a new look at the incarnation and its implications for human/nonhuman relations are three-fold. The first is the necessity for a more useful way of attending to the particularity of God's incarnation as a human than is currently available, through examining the topic of the nonhuman. Attending to the doctrine of the incarnation while giving attention to the nonhuman has benefits not only for thinking positively about nonhuman creatures, but also for understanding the incarnation more clearly. The existing

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<sup>59</sup> Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 254-84; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 95-113, 138-55; Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 163-66; Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 92-115; Jones, *The School of Compassion*, 259-60; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 114-25; Yarri, *The Ethics of Animal Experimentation*; Song, Robert. 'Transgenic Animals and Ethics: Recognising an Appropriate Dignity.' In *Animals as Religious Subjects: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, David Clough, and Becky Artinian-Kaiser, 243-58. London: Bloomsbury, 2013; Gaffney, James. 'The Relevance of Animal Experimentation to Roman Catholic Ethical Methodology.' In *Animal Sacrifices: Religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science*, edited by Tom Regan, 149-70. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986.

<sup>60</sup> Jones, *The School of Compassion*, 259; Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 116-22; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 114-24; Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 69-79; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 114-25.

<sup>61</sup> Jones, *The School of Compassion*, 260; Hobgood-Oster, *The Friends We Keep*, 58-69.

answers for the important and interesting question as to why God became human in particular come up short for both the more traditional account, as well as the more contemporary reaction against it. The traditional account suggests that God's incarnation as a human is relevant only for humans, and thus retains a focus on the humanity at the expense of the rest of creation. Such an idea is found in the writings of Anselm for instance who claimed that angels cannot be forgiven for their sin,<sup>62</sup> and nonhuman animals cannot sin since they lack a rational will,<sup>63</sup> thus the incarnation is only effective for humans. This account has come under criticism by a number of theologians for the way it excludes the rest of creation from both the incarnation and the redemption it enables, through focusing solely on humanity.<sup>64</sup> Such a focus on humanity, while neglecting to account for the rest of creation, has led to an insufficient account of the incarnation and its motivation. I join with such criticisms in this thesis, and show that such a rendition fails to account for a fallen creation which God wills to redeem. However, while I agree with such accounts in being critical of how theologians like Anselm have approached the incarnation and its effective reach, the way in which such contemporary accounts, particularly those from an animal theology standpoint, extend the inclusivity of the incarnation to include the nonhuman creation is done in an unsatisfactory way.

The question I raise, why God willed to become human in particular, is one which few have attempted to address within animal theology. For those that do, a common approach contemporary accounts take is to broaden the inclusivity of the incarnation by negating the significance of God's particular chosen nature. In such accounts, Christ was not so much taking on human nature as he was creaturely flesh. Here, in the incarnation God took on creaturely flesh in order to redeem the whole fleshy creation. This view has a great deal of support from many contemporary theologians who are interested in the theology of nonhuman animals, and attempt to extend God's redemptive concerns to include other creatures. David Clough for instance, seeks to widen the context of election by rejecting the

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<sup>62</sup> Anselm. *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 6 and 19. In *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans, 193-232. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

<sup>63</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3, 4, 7, 15, 19. In *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans, 357-89. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

<sup>64</sup> See for example Linzey, Andrew, 'Is Christianity Irredeemably Speciesist?' In *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Mowbray: London, 1997, xvi; Edwards, Denis. 'The Redemption of Animals in an Incarnational Theology.' In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, London: SCM Press, 2009, 81-99; and Cobb Jr., John. 'All Things in Christ?' In *Animals on the Agenda*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto. London: SCM Press, 1998, 173-80.

specificity of the incarnation to the human.<sup>65</sup> Andrew Linzey,<sup>66</sup> Denis Edwards,<sup>67</sup> John Cobb Jr.,<sup>68</sup> and David Cunningham<sup>69</sup> likewise attempt to expand the doctrine of the incarnation beyond the human by negating the importance of the particularity of the humanity in the incarnation, focusing instead on the broader category of ‘flesh’.<sup>70</sup> In such cases, God’s incarnation could equally well have occurred with God taking on the nature of a slug, for this creature too, partakes of creaturely fleshiness. However such attempts to make the doctrine of the incarnation inclusive at this point render incoherent the actuality of God’s having become human; while these accounts answer the question as to why God became incarnate, they do not provide an answer to why God chose to become human in particular. Thus both common ways of accounting for the incarnational choice of God fail to give a sufficient account for the divine will to become incarnate as a human if the incarnation is to be expanded beyond the human. What is needed is some fresh thinking on this topic to solve a problem which is occurring regarding the way in which the incarnation is being attended to. Given the centrality of the incarnation for Christian doctrine, this is a gap which this dissertation seeks to fill.

The second rationale is to undertake work within systematic theology that responds to the growing interest in ‘the animal question’ in other academic fields. My own theological work on the place of nonhuman animals comes at a time where the very ‘question of where animals belong in theology is a relatively novel one within the Christian tradition.’<sup>71</sup> Yet though novel, it is a question which is growing in interest. In the past few decades there has been a steady increase in the topic of the theology of nonhuman animals, and this is illustrated in the growth of publications on the topic, both academic and lay. Often such works are based around an ethical approach for humans towards nonhuman animals,<sup>72</sup> asking who nonhuman animals are, so that we can know how to treat them. There has been little

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<sup>65</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, 81-103. See also Clough, David. ‘On Thinking Theologically About Animals: A Response.’ *Zygon*, 49. 3 (2014) 766-67.

<sup>66</sup> Linzey, ‘Is Christianity Irredeemably Speciesist?’, xvi.

<sup>67</sup> Edwards, ‘The Redemption of Animals in an Incarnational Theology’, 81-99.

<sup>68</sup> Cobb Jr., ‘All Things in Christ?’, 173-80.

<sup>69</sup> Cunningham, David. ‘The Way of All Flesh: Rethinking the *Imago Dei*.’ In *Creaturely Theology*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough. London: SCM Press, 2009, 100-17.

<sup>70</sup> See also Muddiman, John. ‘A New Testament Doctrine of Creation.’ In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, 32. London: SCM Press, 1998.

<sup>71</sup> Clough, *On Animals*, xii.

<sup>72</sup> The many publications of Andrew Linzey are all broadly operative of a liberation theology towards animals based on his concept of ‘Theos-rights’. Daniel Miller’s book, *Animal Ethics and the Good Samaritan*, is a good example of a recent explicitly theological-ethics approach towards doing a theology of nonhuman animals.

done in the way of systematic theology with regards to nonhuman animals, especially concerning doctrinal theology.<sup>73</sup> If nonhuman animals can be shown to be included in the doctrine of the incarnation – one of the most central Christian doctrines – then this will go a long way towards justifying and supporting the work that has been done in the previous decades towards making the case for the importance of the inclusion of nonhuman animals as morally relevant within Christian theology and ethics. Thus part of the rationale is about expanding the account of the incarnation and its redemption commonly given.

A final rationale for this thesis is that the particular nuanced answer I will give has implications for how we construe human ethical responsibility to nonhuman animals, and getting this right is a key responsibility for Christian theology. As this thesis will argue, if part of what it means to be human is a calling to represent both God to creation, and creation to God, then this has considerable bearing on understanding what it means to be human, as well as informing human action towards nonhuman creatures. Given the sheer numbers of creatures that the modern world now makes use of – over 60 billion killed per year<sup>74</sup> – if humans have an ethical responsibility towards them based on the very nature and calling of what it means to be human, then this is a serious concern. The force of this concern is not simply the inconceivable numbers of creatures humans directly have an impact on, but the quality of their lives through our use of industrial farming. If nonhuman animals are to be understood as theologically and morally significant, and if this is based on the central doctrine of the incarnation, then the resulting implications for how Christians understand and approach their relationships with the rest of the created order should be abundantly clear.

## Methodology

The way in which I will make my case is by approaching the doctrine of the incarnation through four major theologians of the Christian tradition and their respective contributions towards understanding why God became human in particular. These four theologians are Anselm of Canterbury, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor, and Karl Barth. Each of these theologians will act as representatives for one particular account of why

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<sup>73</sup> David Clough's book *On Animals* is the most comprehensive discussion of Christian doctrine in relation to animals to date. His approach however, spans creation to redemption and the place of nonhuman animals within each, and thus is only able to devote a single chapter to the incarnation.

<sup>74</sup> Compassion in World Farming, *Global Warning: Climate Change and Farm Animal Welfare*. Godalming, Surrey: Compassion in World Farming, 2008, 6.



God willed to become human in particular. The four accounts of what is uniquely human such that God willed to become incarnate in human nature, are that humans are uniquely sinful (Anselm), are uniquely the image of God (Gregory of Nyssa), are uniquely microcosmic (Maximus), and are uniquely representative covenant partners (Barth). Proceeding in this way allows for a close examination of four of the main suggestions as to why God became human that are found in the Christian tradition through a detailed study based on the writings of authors well-known as figures for their respective answers. Each of the theologians were chosen not simply due to their contributions on these specific topics – which generally are quite significant in their own right – but also so that this thesis can engage with four major figures from the Christian tradition.

The first account of God's rationale for becoming incarnate as a human in particular that I address is given by Anselm of Canterbury. In his theological account of the incarnation, it is clear that the incarnation is primarily motivated by God's will to address the presence of sin in the world. Because of who humans are, and their distinctive nature as compared to angels and nonhuman animals, they alone are capable of being saved by God from their sin, and it is for this reason that God became human. This account of God's rationale for the incarnation is very common throughout the Christian tradition. Indeed, though I use Anselm as a focal character for this particular rationale of God's incarnation as a human, each of the other authors I have chosen also recognise the significant place that overcoming sin has within a proper theology of the incarnation, and they are not alone. God's incarnation as based on His desire to save a fallen humanity is found as a driving rationale in the works of Athanasius,<sup>75</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus,<sup>76</sup> John Calvin,<sup>77</sup> and Jonathan Edwards<sup>78</sup> to name a few throughout the Christian tradition. What these authors, and many more throughout the

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<sup>75</sup> Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, §6-8. In *Athanasius Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*. Edited and translated by Robert W. Thomson, 134-277. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

<sup>76</sup> Gregory of Nazianzen, *Ep. 101*. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. VII*. Translated by Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow, 439-43. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983. In this letter to Cledonius the Priest, Gregory notes how God became human for our redemption, to save humanity which had fallen through sin.

<sup>77</sup> Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* Vol.1. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, 2006, 2.12.2. Within Calvin writes that 'the work to be performed by the Mediator was of no common description: being to restore us to the divine favour, so as to make us, instead of sons of men, sons of God; instead of heirs of hell, heirs of a heavenly kingdom. Who could do this unless the Son of God should also become the Son of man, and so receive what is ours as to transfer to us what is his, making that which is his by nature to become ours by grace?'

<sup>78</sup> Edwards, Jonathan. *A History of the Work of Redemption*. Worcester: Thomas and Whipple, 1808, Vol.1, Period 2.1. Edwards states that 'Christ became incarnate, or, which is the same thing, became man, to put himself in a capacity for working out our redemption. For though Christ, as God, was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to his being in an immediate capacity for it, it was needful that he should not only be God, but man.'

Christian tradition share, is an understanding of the importance of understanding how sin was addressed in the incarnational work of God for having a full account of the incarnation. Of the many possible theologians, Anselm is of particular interest not only because of the huge influence he had due to his ontological argument, but also because of his atonement theory which examines in detail the role of sin in the rationale for God's incarnation.<sup>79</sup> Anselm literally wrote the book on why God became human (*Cur Deus Homo*), with the answer being God's response to sin. The depth of his accounts of sin and truth enable a logical basis for including the nonhuman within the redemption the incarnation creates, though he himself does not do so. Anselm thus makes an excellent conversation partner for examining the role which sin played in God's rationale for becoming human.

The second topic I will examine is the image of God through the writings of Gregory of Nyssa. As with the topic of sin, the image of God provides an answer to why God became human for it is due to this unique nature, and to ensure that such a nature is not lost, that God acts in the incarnation. Gregory makes an interesting conversational partner on this topic not just because of his influence within the Christian tradition more generally,<sup>80</sup> but also due to the depth and range of ways he presents human nature as images of God, as well as opening up areas (both within the image of God and elsewhere) which connect the human to the nonhuman. Gregory makes use of a wide range of aspects in detailing what the image of God is composed of, including aspects from what are now referred to as the substantive, the functional, and the relational interpretations. It is due to his robust account of the human as images of God, as well as their dual-constitution, that makes Gregory's works particularly useful. Additionally, Gregory's account of the human as both image of God and as dual-natured enables a way of accounting for how the impact of God's incarnation as a human might be expanded beyond the human. It is this complex presentation of what the image of God entails, when combined with his writings on the incarnation, which make Gregory an ideal theologian to engage with for this topic.

The next topic I will examine using the works of Maximus the Confessor is the place of the human constitution as microcosm as rationale for God's choice to become human. This

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<sup>79</sup> Ables, Travis E. 'St Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)' in *The Student's Companion to the Theologians*, edited by Ian S. Markham. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, 150-51.

<sup>80</sup> Edward Hardy (*Christology of the Later Fathers*, 235) writes that 'The importance of Gregory of Nyssa for the development of Christian thought is very great and has often been overlooked. This man who was hailed by the Second Council of Nicaea as "Father of Fathers" and "Star of Nyssa," of whom his friend Gregory of Nazianzus could write (*Ep.* 74) that he as "the column supporting the whole Church," and whom Scotus Eriugena cites no less frequently than Augustine, deserves more study than he has received.'

rationale for the incarnation is based on the idea that humans are uniquely constituted in such a way that they are connected to the rest of the created order, and it is through this constitution that God's incarnational will can be achieved. Though it eventually made its way into Christian theology through a range of theologians, the idea of humans as a microcosm of the world around them is one which precedes the existence of Christianity. It is an idea which is found in the works of Greek philosophers such as Democritus and Plato,<sup>81</sup> and eventually to Philo, who paved the way for it to be used by Christians.<sup>82</sup> The microcosmic understanding found its way into the writings of Origen,<sup>83</sup> who was influential with the Cappadocians, especially Gregory of Nyssa,<sup>84</sup> who took on the idea of humans as a microcosm<sup>85</sup> and was himself a major influence on Maximus.<sup>86</sup> Skipping past Maximus, the idea is also found in John of Damascus within chapter 12 of book 2 of *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Moving ahead to more modern times the idea of humans as a microcosm can be found in the works of theologians such as Colin Gunton<sup>87</sup> and Jürgen Moltmann.<sup>88</sup> Most of the Christian discussion of humans as microcosms entails not just the factual nature of humans as microcosm, but also the link between such a nature and a resultant benefit for the rest of creation. This can be seen in Gregory of Nyssa for instance,<sup>89</sup> as well as more recently in the writings of Gunton. For instance, Gunton writes that 'The future of the whole depends upon this particular part. In that sense, we must affirm the traditional slogan, "man is a microcosm", the one in whom the whole finds its meaning.'<sup>90</sup> Thus there is consistently a move made in such theologians from recognising the microcosmic nature of humanity, to acknowledging their connection to the rest of creation and through this connection, a benefit for the whole of creation. Yet the more intricate details as to how this is accomplished are often left unspoken. While there are many throughout the Christian tradition who have

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<sup>81</sup> Thunberg, Lars. *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Open Court, 1995, 133.

<sup>82</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator*, 134.

<sup>83</sup> Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus 1-16*, 5.3. Translated by Gary Wayne Barkley. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990.

<sup>84</sup> Hardy, Edward. *Christology of the Later Fathers*. London: SCM Press, 1965, 237.

<sup>85</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *The Great Catechism*, ch. 6, from *Select Writings and Letters of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa*. Edited and translated by William Moore and Henry Wilson. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979; *On the Soul and the Resurrection*. Translated by Catherine Roth. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1993, 34, 56.

<sup>86</sup> Tollefsen, Torstein. *The Christocentric Christology of St Maximus the Confessor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 14; von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor*. Translated by Brain E. Daley. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003, 57; Louth, Andrew. *Maximus the Confessor*. London: Routledge, 1996, 27.

<sup>87</sup> Gunton, Colin. *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999, 185-86.

<sup>88</sup> Moltmann, Jürgen. *God In Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*. London: SCM Press, 1985, 186-90.

<sup>89</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Great Catechism*, ch. 6.

<sup>90</sup> Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 185-86.

commented on humans as microcosms, it is in Maximus the Confessor that such a theology has been worked out with more detail and thought than most. Given this, and the way Maximus details the implications of human nature for the rest of the cosmos, the third chapter of this thesis is based around Maximus' construal of humans as microcosm creatures and what contribution this can make towards understanding God's rationale for becoming human in particular.

The final answer I examine to the question regarding God's choice to become human, is that of God's desire to enter into covenant with the representative human creature. While the preceding chapters examined figures and answers that have a long-standing presence in the Christian tradition, this chapter addresses an influential answer given in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by Karl Barth which focuses instead on covenant as a key feature. Like the preceding theologians, Barth is a major figure in the Christian tradition, and his theology was highly influential in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and still is in the 21<sup>st</sup>.<sup>91</sup> Although based on a theologian much more contemporary than the preceding ones, the basis of this idea is not without foundation in the Christian tradition. While the preceding answers leaned towards a focus on something substantively unique about human nature (they are uniquely sinful, they are uniquely made in God's image, they are uniquely microcosmic), there is still a sense that what is unique about the human is not restricted to some attribute or capacity that humans possess, but might also entail a specific calling. This is seen briefly in Gregory,<sup>92</sup> and is found significantly more in Maximus who strongly connects the microcosmic nature of humans with their calling to mediation. With these earlier accounts however, the unique calling seems dependent upon the unique nature of humans, rather than a unique nature due to their unique calling. In Barth the unique calling of humanity, in this case as the representative covenant partner of God, comes through quite strongly as a useful framework for understanding why God became human in particular. Barth's account of the centrality of the covenant and the importance of the

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<sup>91</sup> Gary Dorrien for instance suggests that Barth was 'a field-shaping interpreter of the modern meaning of Christianity' (*The Barthian Revolt in Modern Theology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000, 1), while Nigel Biggar states that 'the massive scale and architectonic nature of Barth's systematic work easily win it a place alongside those other grand edifices of Christian theology, Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* and Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.' John Macquarrie (*Twentieth Century Religious Thought*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963, 321) states that Barth is 'probably the most famous Protestant theologian of the twentieth century so far'.

<sup>92</sup> Gregory (*On the Making of Man*, 12.9) briefly writes on how the human soul, as the image of God, acts like a mirror and reflects God towards the created nature, which is itself a mirror of a mirror. In this way, part of what it means to be the human creature that is the image of God is to mediate God's glory to the rest of creation. See also Hart, David. 'The Mirror of the Infinite: Gregory of Nyssa on the *Vestigia Trinitatis*' in *Modern Theology* 18:4 (2002) 549-50.

creaturely human as partner offers a way retaining human uniqueness, while simultaneously explaining how the nonhuman creation is included in the same redemptive covenant.

The four accounts that I have chosen were selected to give a representational account of how the Christian tradition has generally understood God's incarnational rationale. By no means do these four make up the whole of what the Christian tradition has to say about why God became human in particular, however they are expressive of four major representative ways in which this topic has been understood. Before proceeding, it is worth briefly noting some other suggestions which have been put forward, and to illustrate how some of these alternatives are included in my chosen accounts.

In some cases, the four chosen answers include within them other suggestions as to why God became human in particular. One common expression of this is the claim that God became incarnate as a human in particular due to God's desire for revelation – either to reveal more fully who God is, or to reveal how humans ought to live their lives. Both of these understandings of the incarnation are common in the Christian tradition. Athanasius writes that God came 'to be of service to those in need and to appear in a way that they can bear, lest by his superiority to the need of those who are suffering he trouble the needy and the coming of God be of no help to them.'<sup>93</sup> Here God's choice of incarnation as a human is to ensure that humanity can receive the revelation God seeks to give. Aquinas expresses the revelatory nature of the incarnation and death of God as a human in a different way; it is a means by which one 'man could thus see how much God loved him, and so would be aroused to love him.'<sup>94</sup> John Calvin likewise makes use of the revelatory rationale for God's incarnation as a human within his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*: 'That no one, therefore, may feel perplexed where to seek the Mediator, or by what means to reach him, the Spirit, by calling him man, reminds us that he [Jesus] is near, nay, contiguous to us, inasmuch as he is our flesh.'<sup>95</sup> Here again, God's incarnation as a human is a means by which humans can know who God is, and how He has brought them redemption. Such expressions of God's revelation are thus common enough in the Christian tradition. Yet though revelation is commonly found as a rationale for the incarnation, it is rarely ever put forward as *the* driving rationale. While God's incarnation as a human certainly is revelatory, such revelation is generally seen as secondary in importance next to other reasons for why God acted through the incarnation. For

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<sup>93</sup> Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, §43.

<sup>94</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Q46 A3. In *Summa Theologiae* vol. 54. Translated by Richard T.A. Murphy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

<sup>95</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.12.1.

instance, even though Calvin supports understanding the incarnation as revelatory for humans, he also claims that ‘since the whole Scripture proclaims that he was clothed with flesh in order to become a Redeemer, it is presumptuous to imagine any other cause or end.’<sup>96</sup> Thus (in this case) the primary and most significant reason for God taking on human flesh was to bring about an answer to sin; revelation has a part in this only insofar as it is revealing God’s purposes for redemption. This is the common understanding of a revelatory rationale for God’s incarnation – though many recognise it as present within an account of the incarnation, it is rarely understood as *the* driving basis for why God chose to become human in particular.

The best known occasion where revelation *is* seen as the primary rationale for God’s incarnation can be found in the writings of Peter Abelard who is known for his ‘subjective’ or ‘moral influence’ atonement theory. This atonement theory holds the view that one of the primary rationales for God’s incarnation, life, and death, is not to fulfill a payment of debt, but rather that God’s ‘Son received our nature, and in that nature, teaching us both by work and by example, persevered to the death and bound us to himself even more through love, so that when we have been kindled by so great a benefit of divine grace, true charity might fear to endure nothing for his sake.’<sup>97</sup> Although Abelard accepted that the death of Christ had an objective value,<sup>98</sup> his emphasis throughout is much more towards that of the revelatory example of Christ motivating a change in humans. Here, in common with Anselm and Gregory, Abelard has an infralapsarian view of the incarnation, for each of these authors (unlike Maximus and Barth) view God’s incarnation to be solely in response to human sin. Though Abelard’s primary answer of revelation is significantly different than that given by Anselm and Gregory, each approaches the question in a similar way. Abelard’s answer of revelation, however, leaves little room for an engagement with the nonhuman in the doctrine of the incarnation, for nonhuman animals are unlikely to be able to view such a revelation and learn from it. Where both Anselm’s and Abelard’s accounts of the incarnation are ultimately lacking in the presence of nonhuman animals, Anselm’s theology of sin and truth is thorough enough and cosmic enough, that it creates a logical need for the redemption of the incarnation to be effective for nonhuman animals, even if Anselm does not see a need. Abelard’s account however, and revelation as a primary rationale for the incarnation, are

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<sup>96</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.12.4.

<sup>97</sup> Abelard, Peter. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Translated by Steven R. Cartwright. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2011, 167-68.

<sup>98</sup> See his commentary on Romans 4:25, and 8:3.

insufficient for meaningfully engaging with the nonhuman within God's rationale for becoming human in the incarnation. If the way God deals with sin is based primarily on revealing God's love to humans and therefore acts as a motivation for better moral action, then this leaves little engagement for how nonhuman animals might feature within the doctrine of the incarnation.

In addition to understanding God's will to become incarnate as a human due to a revelation by God, there are also many who suggest that God's choice was dependent on something uniquely human. While the four chapters with their four respective topics are all based around such an idea, there are other aspects of the human which have been put forward as rationale for God's incarnation as a human. By and large, however, such suggestions are included within my thesis in various ways. That is, though not directly discussing them at substantial length, the topics are addressed sufficiently. For example, the idea of God's incarnation as a human as the most fitting form for God to become incarnate (also found in the writings of Augustine),<sup>99</sup> is also found significantly within the works of Anselm and is discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. Fittingness of form, alike to revelation, is generally of secondary importance when compared to what God did in the incarnation. Similarly, the idea that God became human because humans are uniquely rational or free – attributes consistently connected with the divine – are addressed in some detail in a number of chapters when the topic of rationality is brought up. Here, the claim towards human uniqueness in such capacities as rationality is questioned, and ultimately rejected due to the very real potential for nonhuman rationality or even the hypothetical existence of rational nonhuman aliens. In these ways, then, the chapters of this thesis are inclusive of other answers which the Christian tradition has put forward in answering the question as to why God became human. Though not entirely comprehensive, these four major ways offer a representational account of how theological tradition has rendered the specificity of the incarnation.

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<sup>99</sup> Augustine, *The Trinity*. Edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Edmund Hill. New York: New City Press, 1991, Book XIII, 13.

## Synopsis

The following is a brief outline of the chapters and their contribution to the overall argument of this thesis.

In the first chapter the topic of sin is examined through the writings of Anselm of Canterbury. Here the case for demonstrating how God's rationale for the incarnation can be extended beyond the human to include nonhuman animals begins. Anselm's account of the incarnation is motivated by addressing sin, and he makes use of aesthetic concerns and categories while doing so. I show how, given the reality of a biblical cosmic Fall which Anselm did not attend to, his theology can and should be stretched to attend to such a state. This is done through three sections. First, I examine Anselm's cosmology, including the topics of beauty and fittingness, to provide a basis for understanding both Anselm's theology of sin, as well as my criticisms of his overly narrow account of redemption. Next, I review Anselm's account of sin and the Fall, and argue that given his cosmology, his account of sin and its effects needs to be expanded to include the whole of creation. Finally, I address Anselm's understanding of the incarnation and his belief that it is only effective for humans. Using the same reasoning as the second section, I show how the logic of Anselm's theology implies that the effects of the incarnation should be salvific for the whole of creation. While his theological account is capable of expressing *why* God's incarnation is motivated by more than redeeming humanity, it fails to explain *how* the redemption the incarnation brought about is capable of extending to the nonhuman. Anselm's response to why God became human, though certainly useful and indeed necessary, is not a sufficient answer.

In the second chapter, the topic of the image of God is examined through the writings of Gregory of Nyssa. Alike to Anselm, Gregory understands the incarnation to be strongly motivated by God's work to address the problem of sin. Yet Gregory has a particularly nuanced way of presenting God's redemptive work due to his focus on the human constitution, and he does so in a way which, unlike Anselm, provides a means of extending the benefits of the incarnation to the rest of creation. The most significant aspect of the human, and the part which gives them their highest value, is that they are made in God's image. It is as the creatures which are images of God that humans receive their divine calling to both enjoy God, and to partake of His goodness. Gregory conceives of the image of God in a wide variety of ways, including the soul's capacity to mirror God, rationality, and freedom. In nearly all the ways Gregory conceives of the image of God, the nonhuman creation is



absent (or used to contrast against). In what is the most central aspect of the image of God for Gregory (the human soul), however, he claims that this is descriptive of a connection with the rest of the living creation. The human soul is comprised of aspects of the plant (vegetative soul), the animal (the sensible soul) and the rational. This is only the beginning of how Gregory conceives of the human relation to the nonhuman. In addition to the intellectual image of God, humans are also comprised of the irrational, and through the possession of both, are understood to be a microcosm of the world. Through their microcosmic constitution, human nature has a direct connection to the whole of creation, and this connection is one which is intended to be used such that the whole of creation shares in God's glory. How this occurs is not detailed by Gregory, who remains silent on the matter. Though humans as images of God is a useful component to answering why God became human, especially insofar as it suggests a calling associated with it, it is the connected idea of humans as microcosms that shows significant promise regarding understanding why God became human in particular, especially when there is a calling associated with it. Such ideas of Gregory's have good potential, yet Gregory's level of detail is insufficient in these regards. For a fuller account of how the human as microcosm can provide a basis for God's incarnation as a human, this thesis turns to Maximus the Confessor.

The third chapter goes into much greater detail on the topic of the microcosmic nature of humans than was possible with Gregory, through the work of Maximus the Confessor. As with the first two chapters, this one adds to the case for the first of my three points; that God's incarnation was motivated by more than humanity. Yet here I begin to build up my other two points; that God's incarnation as a human was due to a particular calling which God has for humanity, and that this calling has ethical implications for humans with regards to nonhuman animals. This is once more done in three sections. In the first I examine Maximus' broader cosmology, including his *logoi* theology, his understanding of the human including their microcosmic constitution and resulting calling, and the fact that all creation stands in need of redemption. I address Maximus' presentation of the incarnation of Christ in the second section, and show how God's incarnation as a human was done to restore the human nature as microcosm, therefore enabling their calling of mediation to be realised. Finally in the third section I discuss Maximus' argumentation that God's rationale for becoming incarnate as a human in particular, is based in large part on the human constitution as microcosm, through which the whole cosmos is enabled to partake of the end goal of deification. Deification of the cosmos for Maximus, is rooted in the human constitution as

microcosm and their calling to mediation. The implications which this has for understanding what it means to be human in relation to the nonhuman are also discussed here, with humans called to sanctify the nonhuman creation. However I question Maximus on his claim of a unique microcosmic nature for the human, and ultimately this basis is shown to be insufficient as a final answer to why human nature in particular was chosen for the incarnation.

The final chapter is based around the calling of humans as representative covenant partners through the writings of Karl Barth. In this chapter, each of the three arguments of this thesis will be made in the following way. First, the extension of the incarnation to include the nonhuman is shown through their inclusion in the covenant. In the opening section I will detail what the covenant is for Barth, as well as who is included within it. Against other theologians, I will argue that the work of Barth does not deny the nonhuman a place within God's covenantal designs, but secures a place for them via their position as covenantal attendant. Additionally, such inclusion is shown to occur through the calling of the human as representative covenant partner. The second section will address the topic of representation and suggest that it is a central concept for understanding the human as a covenant partner. After describing various capacities which humans have due to their calling as representational covenant partner, I will then detail what occurs in representation, including a calling to communicate on behalf of God to creation as well as from creation to God. This then leads to the third main argument regarding the ethical implications such an understanding has for humans. Though Barth fails in certain aspects when it comes to following through on the logic of his earlier theology regarding human/nonhuman relations, I suggest that ultimately his theology is capable of successfully attending to these relationships. With regards to his theology of sanctification in particular, using the earlier work done on Maximus the Confessor, I state ways in which Barth's theology of sanctification is able to take on a greater attention to the nonhuman than Barth himself gave it.

The concluding chapter surveys the findings of the previous chapters and assesses their significance. It argues in summation that (1) God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human to include the nonhuman, (2) that God became human in particular due to the unique human calling as representative, and (3) that this calling of representation carries with it ethical implications for humans towards nonhuman animals. The way in which each chapter contributes to these arguments, based upon the two driving questions, is then detailed. Next what the implications which the findings of this thesis have

for theology more generally are addressed, as well as ways in which the work that was done in this thesis can be built upon and supplemented.

## Anselm of Canterbury and Sin

### Introduction

In this chapter I begin by embarking on the exploration of the four chosen representative answers to why God became human in the incarnation. To do so, I will engage with Anselm of Canterbury and his understanding of God's rationale for becoming incarnate as addressing the problem of sin and restoring the beauty of God's creation. As discussed in the Introduction, Anselm is an obvious conversation partner for this topic due not only to his large influence on the Christian tradition more generally, but also because of his thorough linking of God's rationale for the incarnation with the divine response to sin across a number of his works, especially within *Cur Deus Homo*. Though Anselm understands God's incarnation as a human to be effective only for humans, in this chapter I will show that in light of the biblical account of a cosmic Fall, and given the logic of his cosmology and his theology of sin and truth, a case can be made for including the nonhuman creation within both the doctrine of sin and its effects, as well as the redemption brought about by the incarnation of God.

The chapter will proceed in three main sections. In the first section, I will examine the cosmology of Anselm and highlight the importance of beauty and fittingness for the cosmos. This will provide a basis for examining Anselm's account of sin and redemption in greater detail, as well as making clear the grounding of my later criticisms against Anselm's overly narrow account of fallenness and redemption. In the next section, I will examine how Anselm understands sin and the Fall, addressing such topics as the nature of sin, which creatures are capable of sinning, and the extent of the Fall. Anselm's overly narrow focus on human sin, to the exclusion of any sort of fallenness for the rest of creation will then be placed against Anselm's theology of truth (briefly, doing what we ought). This section will demonstrate that given Anselm's cosmology and his writings on sin and truth, sin and its effects impact the whole of creation. The final section will examine Anselm's understanding of the incarnation and his view that the act of God in the incarnation is only effective for humans. Just as the logic of Anselm's theology suggests that sin and its effects are concepts which include not just the human, so too does its logic suggest that the incarnation of God as a human must be salvifically effective for the whole of creation, though Anselm's theology is unable to account for how this would work.

Through these sections I will be seeking to show that critical engagement with Anselm indicates that God's rationale for the incarnation must extend beyond the human – the first of my theses. This thesis will be established through the following five key points. First, for Anselm, God's rationale for the incarnation is primarily motivated by God's redemptive response to human sin and its effects. The second and third arguments are related and the majority of the chapter is devoted to substantiating them. These are that Anselm's aesthetic cosmology, with its emphasis on beauty and fittingness, suggests that his account of sin and its effects (via the Fall), and the redemption brought about by the incarnation, need adjusting. Such adjustment is necessitated by the understanding of the Fall which the Bible gives, where all earthly creation, and not just humanity, is fallen and stands in need of redemption to be restored to the beauty God desires for creation. Fourth, while Anselm's theology is capable of accounting for an extension of sin and its effects onto the whole of creation via his theology of truth (though Anselm did not do so), it does not account for the same extension of redemption via the incarnation. The implications of these lead to the final argument, which is that while human sin and its effects are a significant rationale for God's incarnation as a human, they are not a sufficient account of the incarnation. If all creation is fallen, then God's choice to become human in particular needs more substantiating beyond the rationale for addressing evil in the world. Though his aesthetic cosmology would require God to restore the beauty of creation, Anselm is unable to account for how this would be possible through the incarnation of God as a human.

## **Section 1: Aesthetic Cosmology**

### *Rationale for Incarnation*

While the remainder of this chapter will both examine and argue various aspects and issues which arise within Anselm's theology, it is first worth demonstrating that the way in which Anselm approaches the topic is of relevance at all. Proof of the central importance of human sin for Anselm's account of the incarnation is found most significantly within *Cur Deus Homo*. This writing is divided into two books, and it is within the first of these that one can find most clearly that sin is a driving influence for the incarnation. Book 1 is taken up by discussing that it is sin which humans have entered into, and it is sin and its consequences which humans need to be redeemed from. For Anselm, sin (which results in taking honour

from God)<sup>100</sup> is so significant that he writes ‘There is nothing more intolerable in the universal order than that a creature should take away honour from the creator and not repay what he takes away.’<sup>101</sup> Simply put, the incarnation of God as a human is to address this intolerable situation. Anselm himself offers a summary near the end of book 2, and states that

... it was not right that the restoration of human nature should be left undone, and ... it could not have been brought about unless man repaid what he owed to God. This debt was so large that, although no one but man owed it, only God was capable of repaying it... Hence it was a necessity that God should take man into the unity of his person, so that one who ought, by virtue of his nature, to make the repayment and was not capable of doing so, should be one who, by virtue of his person, was capable of it.<sup>102</sup>

Humans are unable to be saved except by repaying this honour to God, yet they are wholly incapable of doing so. The incarnation is God’s way of addressing precisely this problem, and, as will be argued, all the connected issues that arise from sin.

Yet as Anselm’s quotation above shows, there is more to it than this. Part of the rationale for the incarnation is that ‘it was not right that the restoration of human nature should be left undone.’ This brief phrase is illustrative of Anselm’s broader cosmology, for God’s rationale to act (that it was ‘not right’ for God’s creative plans to be undone) is based around a cosmology where there is an emphasis on beauty and fittingness. These concepts play a large role in the way in which Anselm describes most of his theology, and were part of the theological world in which Anselm existed. More specifically, a great deal of what Anselm writes regarding sin and the incarnation is based around such aesthetic concepts. For Anselm, God’s rationale to act in the incarnation is based on the impact that human sin has on the fittingness and beauty of God’s creative plans, and God’s working to restore such things. Yet as will be shown below, such concepts, if used consistently, would also imply that any effects of human sin such as those described in the biblical account of the Fall, would also need addressing for God’s aesthetic plans for creation to be restored.

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<sup>100</sup> Anselm, *Why God Became Man* from *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*. Edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, preface, 261. Hereafter referred to by its Latin title, *Cur Deus Homo*, and abbreviated to *CDH*.

<sup>101</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.13.

<sup>102</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.18.

The remainder of this first section will examine two aspects of Anselm's cosmology. First, the way in which Anselm constructs his theological project in light of the related aesthetic topics of beauty and fittingness will be studied. Second, the key concepts of freedom and rationality will be examined to show not only their importance to Anselm's overall theology, but more specifically as essential aspects of what are vital to sin. By detailing how Anselm constructs his cosmology it will enable a more detailed look into the place of sin within such a cosmology, and its impacts on the various creatures within. This will then allow for a critical examination of such an account, as well as the salvific effects of God's incarnation, and give a partial answer to the question as to why God became human. As I will argue later on, given Anselm's aesthetic cosmology, his theology of sin and the incarnation needs adjusting to account for the whole of creation in both the areas of a fallenness away from the will of God, as well as the redemptive acts of God in the incarnation.

### *Aesthetics*

Aesthetics is a concept which plays a large role in the theology of Anselm, and it does so in a number of ways. The worldview of Anselm is in large part based around such aesthetic categories as beauty and fittingness. Indeed, David Hogg suggests that the 'most pervasive constituent of Anselm's *weltbild* [worldview] is aesthetics.'<sup>103</sup> For Anselm and his contemporaries, aesthetics referred to 'an understanding of reality that is based on the conviction that the harmony and unity, the beauty and fittingness that is part of God's being have been imprinted on his creation.'<sup>104</sup> The task of viewing and understanding aesthetic categories within creation 'takes into account the very nature of reality and its givenness in God. It is, therefore, not an exercise in subjective appraisal nor even an endeavour towards objective determination, but a thorough attempt to assimilate and appropriate the distinctive of the divine perspective.'<sup>105</sup> Simply put, aesthetics is about seeing God in creation. Hogg explains that 'the beauty of a rose or another other object does not witness to beauty itself, but to the one who is beauty and thereby supplies that rose with the quality of beauty.'<sup>106</sup> Such a worldview was not Anselm's alone, but was a medieval way of understanding the world and of making propositions. Here, ideas were put forward and seen as strong not

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<sup>103</sup> Hogg, David. *Anselm of Canterbury: The Beauty of Theology*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, 7.

<sup>104</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 7.

<sup>105</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 14.

<sup>106</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 21-22.

simply due to logical consistency, but also by the use of aesthetic categories.<sup>107</sup> Given that this was the worldview of Anselm and his contemporaries, we need not expect that Anselm would have himself recognised his reliance on this concept, yet the idea is found throughout his writings, especially with regards to the ideas of beauty and fittingness.

Beauty is a frequent topic within a range of Anselm's writings, yet it is not one which he defines. Throughout his writings, Anselm uses it in a variety of ways. In some cases he uses it with regard to the physical visual appeal of an object, e.g. describing the visual beauty of parts of God's creation,<sup>108</sup> or the beauty of gold.<sup>109</sup> As Hogg notes however, 'Anselm's concept of beauty extends far beyond fine art and beauty as a description of the physical appeal of an object.'<sup>110</sup> Within *Cur Deus Homo* in particular,<sup>111</sup> rather than using it with reference to poetic or pictorial beauty, it is used in reference to 'the beauty of a perfectly ordered universe.'<sup>112</sup> What these various uses share is an understanding of beauty as 'that which delights.'<sup>113</sup> Such delight is based on the aesthetic categories which beauty is a part of. Montague Brown describes a situation within *On Truth* 5, where Anselm is detailing the fittingness of fire doing as it should by creating heat, and writes that 'The "ought" here seems more of an aesthetic ought, the insight that in something beautiful, everything is where it should be.'<sup>114</sup> Beauty then, as an aesthetic category based in God, is present in all that exists as it should. Anselm writes that 'When such a being desires what is right, he is honouring God ... subordinating himself to [God's] will and governance, maintaining his own proper station in life within the natural universe, and, to the best of his ability, maintaining the beauty of the universe itself.'<sup>115</sup> When creatures fail to live as God intends for them, the beauty that is God's orderly and righteous willing for creation, is tarnished.<sup>116</sup> As R.W. Southern notes, 'In God's kingdom of perfect power and justice, the slightest uncorrected disorder mars the whole: it shows a deficiency either of justice – in the sense of failing to exhibit the true nature of God – or of power in the work of God. Either of these defects would

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<sup>107</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 2; Evans, G. R. *Anselm and Talking About God*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978, 157.

<sup>108</sup> Anselm, *13<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 60. In *St. Anselm's Book of Meditations and Prayers*, translated by M.R., 163-80. London: Burns and Gates, 1872.

<sup>109</sup> Anselm, *13<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 60.

<sup>110</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 14.

<sup>111</sup> Brown, Montague. 'Anselm on Truth and Beauty.' *The Saint Anselm Journal*, 8.1 (2012) 8.

<sup>112</sup> Southern, R.W. *Saint Anselm: Portrait in a Landscape*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 212.

<sup>113</sup> Brown, 'Anselm on Truth and Beauty', 3.

<sup>114</sup> Brown, 'Anselm on Truth and Beauty', 7.

<sup>115</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15.

<sup>116</sup> Jones, Paul Dafydd. 'Barth and Anselm: God, Christ and the Atonement.' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12.3 (2010) 264.



be contrary to the divine nature.<sup>117</sup> Thus the appreciation of beauty is an appreciation of that which is as it should be, that which is orderly and fitting, and existing according to the will of God. Anselm thus describes not only created reality as beautiful,<sup>118</sup> but suggests that the way in which God addresses the problem of sin in the incarnation is a thing of ‘indescribable beauty’.<sup>119</sup> Yet beauty is not the only way in which Anselm describes the nature and works of God. In addition, Anselm also significantly discusses the place of fittingness within his theology.

The concept of fittingness has an important role within the theology of Anselm overall, and is at the heart of the argument found within *Cur Deus Homo*.<sup>120</sup> Alike to beauty, fittingness (or appropriateness) is found in a wide range of theological topics for Anselm. Hogg notes three related ways in which Anselm uses the term: as that which is in accord with right order, as that which is in character, and as that which is morally necessary.<sup>121</sup> Such ideas tend to overlap (e.g. it is in God’s character to act with right order)<sup>122</sup> and, as shown above, are connected to the other aesthetic categories such as beauty. Indeed, Anselm links them himself within *Cur Deus Homo* 1.3 when, after describing various ways in which God’s restoration of humanity is done fittingly, he states that such ways ‘display the indescribable beauty of the fact that our redemption was procured in this way.’ Fittingness, broadly speaking, occurs within discussions on God’s nature, God’s actions in creation, divine capacities (such as freedom) which are shared with creatures, the ordering of creation, and within Anselm’s writings on creaturely responses to sin. With regards to the nature of God, Anselm suggests that the Son is the Father’s essence, and that this is a more fitting claim than the Father is the Son’s essence.<sup>123</sup> Likewise Anselm also describes in *On the Incarnation of the Word* why the incarnation is appropriate for the Son, and not the Father or the Holy Spirit,<sup>124</sup> which he also does within *Cur Deus Homo*.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 212.

<sup>118</sup> Anselm, *CDH* 1.15.

<sup>119</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.3.

<sup>120</sup> Ables, Travis E. ‘St Anselm of Canterbury.’ In *The Student’s Companion to the Theologians*, edited by Ian S. Markham. Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell (2013), 148; Holmes, Stephen R. ‘The Upholding of Beauty: A Reading of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo*.’ *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 54.2 (2001) 195.

<sup>121</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 168.

<sup>122</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 168.

<sup>123</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 45.

<sup>124</sup> Anselm, *On the Incarnation of the Word* ch. 10. In *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*. Edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans, 233-59. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

<sup>125</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.9.

Moving beyond the nature of the Trinity, Anselm also discusses the fittingness of God's actions and plans for the created cosmos, most often in regards to why the incarnation occurred as it did.<sup>126</sup> Early on in 1.4 of *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm discusses a large number of 'appropriate' and 'fitting' reasons for God to have become incarnate as He did and to die as He did. A few examples can illustrate the extent to which Anselm uses the idea of appropriateness here. Anselm writes that it is

appropriate that, just as death entered the human race through a man's disobedience, so life should be restored through a man's obedience; and that just as the sin which was the cause of our damnation originated from a woman, similarly the originator of our justification and salvation should be born of a woman. Also, that the devil, who defeated the man whom he beguiled through the taste of a tree, should himself be similarly be defeated by a man through a tree-induced suffering which he, the devil, inflicted.<sup>127</sup>

Ultimately, the thrust of all such descriptions of the fittingness of God's actions are summed up by Anselm in his statement that 'It was not fitting that what God had planned for mankind should be utterly nullified.'<sup>128</sup> Here, it is contrary to the character of God and the way He has willed to order creation, for God's plans for creation to fail to reach their end.<sup>129</sup> Yet Anselm also goes beyond the incarnation and redemptive works of God in his writings on fittingness. Later in 1.16 of *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm states that 'It should not be doubted that the number of reasoning beings exist in a number which has been rationally calculated, and it would not be fitting to be more or less.'<sup>130</sup> Thus from God's creative plans to the way in which God brings about redemption, fittingness is a crucial element for understanding why certain actions occur as opposed to others. In addition to God and divine interactions within the world, Anselm also understands fittingness to have a role in how freedom is defined.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> For a wide recognition of the importance of fittingness for Anselm's presentation of the incarnation, see Rodger, Symeon. 'The Soteriology of Anselm of Canterbury, An Orthodox Perspective' in *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*. Vol. 34 no 1 (1989), 30; Ables, 'St Anselm', 148-9; and Leftow, Brian. 'Anselm on the Necessity of the Incarnation' in *Religious Studies*, 31:2 (1995) 174-76.

<sup>127</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.3. There are other areas where Anselm discusses the fittingness of God's chosen method becoming incarnate which he discusses in other works. In *On the Virgin Concept and Original Sin* (Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception and Original Sin from Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*. Edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, § 18) Anselm discusses that God was not born of a virgin out of necessity, but because the virgin birth was fitting.

<sup>128</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.4.

<sup>129</sup> Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 169.

<sup>130</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.16. Though the same logic would seem also to apply to nonrational creatures, this point is not made by Anselm.

<sup>131</sup> Anselm's understanding of freedom will be detailed later in this section.

Thus in all these varied ways, from the character of God, to divine dealings with creation, to freedom and creaturely response to sin, the idea of ‘fittingness’ plays a significant role in Anselm’s wider theological picture. As with beauty, fittingness is a significant concept with regards to redemption, and conditions for both need to be satisfied for a proper redemption to take place.

Such a brief look at the aesthetic aspects of Anselm’s theology through the concepts of beauty and fittingness is useful in understanding the broader theological picture in which this chapter will operate in examining the incarnation and the redemption it brings about. These categories give us not only the theological worldview which Anselm worked within, but also allow us to understand how Anselm conceives of other theological topics such as sin (in which the beauty of God’s creation is tarnished) and redemption (in which God acts to restore creation to its intended beauty), as well as the means by which God brings about redemption (the incarnation, which is a fitting way for God to act). This cosmology will be used below to critically engage with Anselm’s theology of sin and fallenness (to extend the category of fallenness to nonhuman creatures), as well as his theology of redemption (to show how Anselm’s cosmologically driven account of redemption again requires extending this to nonhuman animals).

Yet Anselm’s cosmology is naturally not focused entirely on aesthetics. Related to Anselm’s aesthetic cosmic picture is his understanding of the importance of rectitude, truth, justice, as well as freedom and rationality within the cosmos. Anselm discusses such concepts repeatedly in his discourses on the nature of God’s creatures, and the way in which he does shows that even here, his descriptions are done in a way which is fitting to his aesthetic conception of the cosmos. The related ideas of rectitude, truth, justice, freedom, and rationality are all descriptive of a cosmic system in which there is a beautiful and fitting way to be, act, and will. More fully understanding these not only enables a more accurate picture of Anselm’s cosmology, but also allows for knowledge regarding how Anselm’s cosmology incorporates the various creaturely groups. This is due to how Anselm uses the topics of rectitude, truth, justice, and freedom to in part define and describe the nature of angels, humans, and nonhuman animals. Knowledge about these various aspects allows for a better understanding of the various creaturely categories Anselm understands to exist, which then allows for a better appreciation for why God became human in particular. In addition, these categories will have implications for how God chooses to respond to the fallenness of creation, especially with regards to nonhuman animals who are seen to lack these. Exploring

these topics allows us to see how Anselm sets up his accounts of sin and redemption, which, as will be shown below, need adjusting to account for a fallen creation which extends beyond the human.

The various capacities which will be discussed in this chapter are all related to one another, yet if there were to be a central one, it would be rectitude (righteousness) or truth. In the theology of Anselm, rectitude is closely aligned with truth, to the point where he repeatedly defines them as equivalents.<sup>132</sup> A secure grasp of this concept is essential for understanding both Anselm's theology of sin, as well as the latter criticism which I will make against Anselm regarding his failure to address a fallen creation, yet it is through his presentation of truth that Anselm's theology can be shifted to successfully account for a fallen cosmos. Within his book *On Truth*, Anselm repeatedly draws an identity between rectitude and truth. In chapter 2, he writes that 'They are indeed the same thing ... truth is no different from rectitude', and the same idea is illustrated in chapters 4, 7, and 13. Yet although he repeatedly makes this claim, later on within *On Truth* Anselm becomes slightly more detailed in his description, and suggests that truth is 'rectitude perceptible by the mind alone.'<sup>133</sup> Truth then, seems to be a particular form of rectitude, one which is open only to the mind. Despite this distinction, Anselm repeatedly uses truth and rectitude to define each other in a way which is more of a circular definition which does not allow for much usage without further information. Anselm provides this information throughout *On Truth* through his repeated description of truth and rectitude as things which creatures 'ought' to be and do and will. A few examples can illustrate this clearly. Within chapter 4 Anselm writes that 'So long as [a creature] wills what [it] ought, which is why [it] was given a will, [it is] in rectitude and in truth'; and within chapter 5 Anselm states that 'Every action that does what it ought is fittingly said to do the truth'.<sup>134</sup> Thus truth and rectitude are descriptive of the way in which each and everything ought to be. Yet the way in which truth and rectitude are expressed in various beings varies. Truth can be expressed in not only the being of something, but also in what it does and wills.

These three different expressions of truth are descriptive of different aspects of creaturely existence. Anselm writes about these various parts of truth throughout *On Truth*, but devotes specific chapters to each of these ideas – chapter 4 is on truth of will, chapter 5

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<sup>132</sup> See Visser and Williams, 'Anselm's Account of Freedom, 180; and Nieuwenhove, *An Introduction to Medieval Theology*, 93.

<sup>133</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 11.

<sup>134</sup> See also *On Truth*, ch. 7 and 13.

on truth of action, and chapter 7 on the truth of essences. For example, Anselm describes how fire, in being hot and heating things, is existing in truth,<sup>135</sup> as is a stone which falls when let go.<sup>136</sup> Likewise, a horse in willing to go to the pasture is willing what it ought.<sup>137</sup> Thus in a very real sense, everything that exists as God intends for it to, is living in truth and rectitude, from the rational to the irrational. Yet Anselm does distinguish between various creaturely capacities in his discussions of rectitude and truth. On the one hand, he distinguishes between what creatures do naturally, and what they do willingly; while a stone may naturally fall, humans must willingly choose to do some good and truthful act. Even among those creatures that will (angels, humans, and nonhuman animals), Anselm makes a distinction between those that will naturally (such as a horse going for the pasture,<sup>138</sup> or a dog loving its young),<sup>139</sup> and willing rectitude for its own sake.<sup>140</sup> Indeed part of the reason why Anselm makes such distinctions is driven by his desire to distinguish between rectitude which occurs naturally or for personal benefit, and that which is worthy of praise.<sup>141</sup> Justice is precisely when truth or rectitude is willed by the creature, or as Anselm puts it ‘Justice is not rectitude of knowledge or action, but of will.’<sup>142</sup> In addition, justice is not simply a righteous will, but one that wills what is righteous because it is righteous, and such a will can only be found in rational creatures.<sup>143</sup> Thus even though in falling, a stone is acting in line with rectitude, and in willing for the field, a horse is willing with rectitude, it is only in the rational will that a creature wills rectitude for its own sake. Understanding Anselm’s conception of truth as ‘doing what one ought’ will assist in making better sense of his theology of sin, where creatures are not doing what they ought to. In addition, as I will show, though Anselm himself seems to have failed to account for a fallen creation as described in the Bible, his theology of truth can be extended to account for a place within a fallen creation for the nonhuman creation which, due to the sinful effects of humans, has been thwarted in its ability to exist as it ought to. Such a fallen state likewise will have implications for the necessity of extending Anselm’s account of the redemptive acts of God who wills to restore the beauty of creation such that it can exist as it was intended to.

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<sup>135</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 5.

<sup>136</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12.

<sup>137</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12.

<sup>138</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12.

<sup>139</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 13.

<sup>140</sup> See for example *On Free Will*, ch. 13 where Anselm makes this very distinction.

<sup>141</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12. ‘Praise’ is also given by Anselm as a reason for why God enabled both humans and angels capable of sinning, such that those that did not would be deserving of praise and gratitude.

<sup>142</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12. See also Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 8.

<sup>143</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12.

Before moving away from Anselm's aesthetic cosmology to examine sin directly, it is useful to touch upon a couple of related concepts, which, alike to beauty, fittingness, and truth, play a large role in Anselm's theology, and in particular his theology regarding the various types of creatures. The two concepts of freedom and rationality used by Anselm can be understood in two main ways. First, they are used by Anselm with regards to defining and describing what it means to sin, and how sin is possible (e.g. through the use of free will and rationality). Second, they can also be used to differentiate between those creatures which Anselm understands as capable of sinning (humans and angels), from those who are unable (nonhuman animals). Understanding Anselm's aesthetic cosmology as well as his theology of freedom and rationality will enable a much more detailed account of how Anselm presents sin more generally, as well as those creatures that are capable of sin.

### *Creaturely Features*

The first important concept with regards to a defining feature of some creatures (the human and angelic) with respect to their capacity to sin is freedom. In a variety of his writings, though most famously in his book *On Free Will*, Anselm rejected the common view of freedom in his day (and indeed, the common modern understanding as well) that freedom is related to the capacity to choose between various options, and ultimately, to choose between doing good or evil. Anselm begins *On Free Will* by rejecting outright understanding freedom as the power to sin or not to sin and he does so for two main reasons.<sup>144</sup> The first reason is based on the capacity of God and the angels: 'I do not think free will is the power to sin or not to sin. Indeed if this were its definition, neither God nor the angels, who are unable to sin, would have free will, which is impious to say.'<sup>145</sup> The second reason which Anselm gives for rejecting the capacity to sin from his definition of freedom is based on the idea that a will is freer if it is unable to sin. This logic is itself based on the idea of creatures having a specific calling by God to live and act in a certain way (a way of rectitude) and that one who is more capable of living in this way is freer than one who lacks this ability.<sup>146</sup> Thus part of what defines freedom for Anselm with regards to creatures, is their being capable of being the creature that God intends for them to be.<sup>147</sup> Within *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm supplements this

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<sup>144</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, 1. In *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*. Edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. See also Visser, Sandra and Thomas Williams. 'Anselm's Account of Freedom' in *The Cambridge Companion to Anselm*. Edited by Brian Davies and Brian Leftow. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 182.

<sup>145</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 1.

<sup>146</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 1.

<sup>147</sup> Kane, Stanley G. 'Anselm's Definition of Freedom' *Religious Studies*, 9:3 (1973) 300.

idea by suggesting that “freedom” relates only to the freedom to perform what is advantageous or fitting.’<sup>148</sup> For Anselm, free will is ‘not some kind of neutral, indifferent capacity. We are only free when we actively will goodness.’<sup>149</sup> Freedom then, is to be understood as teleological in nature.<sup>150</sup> The definition which ultimately sums up his understanding of freedom is that ‘the liberty of will is the capacity for preserving rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude itself.’<sup>151</sup> When a creature exists like this, they exist in a state of justice, for ‘Justice is rectitude of the will preserved for its own sake’.<sup>152</sup>

Despite such an understanding of freedom as teleological in nature, and an outright rejection of freedom as including the capacity to sin, Anselm does also understand freedom to be related in a sense to the power to choose between various options. This is most especially true within the second chapter of *On Free Will*, where the choice to sin was one which was done ‘willingly and freely and not of necessity’.<sup>153</sup> Here, a careful reading is required to retain the first understanding of freedom with this almost opposite description of a free will. Within this section, Anselm describes how freedom and the ability to sin are two different abilities. Anselm expresses that the first humans and the fallen angels ‘sinned through their own free will, though not insofar as it was free, that is, not through that thanks to which it was free and had the power not to sin or to serve sin, but rather by the power it had of sinning, unaided by its freedom not to sin or to be coerced into the servitude of sin.’<sup>154</sup> Thus though using similar terms, Anselm makes a distinction between freedom proper (the capacity for preserving rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude itself) and not being coerced into a decision.

In comparison to rectitude, truth, justice, and freedom, Anselm does little to define reason or rationality, yet it constitutes an essential aspect of what it means to be able to sin. While Anselm wrote such books as *On Truth*, and *On Free Will*, there is no equivalent for rationality. Despite a shorter time spent in defining and describing rationality, Anselm does give his reader some hint at what he means which matches with a common understanding of rationality. Anselm states that reason is the capacity ‘whereby we can know’.<sup>155</sup> Rationality is

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<sup>148</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.14.

<sup>149</sup> Van Nieuwenhove, Rik. *An Introduction to Medieval Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 93.

<sup>150</sup> Visser and Williams, ‘Anselm’s Account of Freedom’, 183.

<sup>151</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 3.

<sup>152</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3.

<sup>153</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 2.

<sup>154</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 2.

<sup>155</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 4.

thus the capacity which, for those creatures that possess it, enables knowledge and learning to take place. Such knowledge is to be directed both towards knowing oneself, and knowing God.<sup>156</sup> Anselm also discusses rationality in greater detail, however, when he does not discuss it more abstractly on its own, but when he describes its presence in rational creatures. In doing so, he suggests that the reason why God made a creature rational is ‘in order that it may distinguish between right and wrong, and between the greater good and the lesser good. Otherwise, it was created rational to no purpose.’<sup>157</sup> To the degree that creatures do not choose what is right, they sin.<sup>158</sup> Alike to his understanding of freedom, Anselm does not view rationality in a neutral way, but as teleological in nature. Following his description above of rationality as the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, good and greater, he states that ‘It is not fitting that God should have given such an important power to no purpose ... the rational nature was created to the end that it should love and choose, above all, the highest good, and that it should do this, not because of something else, but because of the highest good itself.’<sup>159</sup> Thus the purpose of such rationality is knowledge which leads to love, and love of the highest and most supreme essence. Anselm makes this point in both the *Monologion* (‘The rational creature is made for this purpose: to love the supreme essence above all other goods’<sup>160</sup>) and *Cur Deus Homo* (‘God has made nothing more precious than rational nature, whose intended purpose is that it should rejoice in him’<sup>161</sup>). The rational nature’s importance is due to the viewed similarity between the rational mind and God, as well as the capacity which rationality allows for the rational mind to know God. Anselm explains in *Monologion* that ‘The rational mind [is] that which comes closest to the supreme essence in virtue of its natural essence. So then, the rational mind may be the only created thing that is able to rise to the task of investigating the supreme nature.’<sup>162</sup> Rationality then, is a topic of large importance in comprehending how Anselm understands the created order; both in terms of which creatures are most alike to God, as well as being descriptive of a purpose for those creatures with this capacity.

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<sup>156</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 32.

<sup>157</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.1.

<sup>158</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15.

<sup>159</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.1.

<sup>160</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, 68.

<sup>161</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.4.

<sup>162</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, 66. It is interesting to note that though Anselm seems fairly sure in this unique capacity of the rational mind, he does leave open the possibility of other created things being able to know and learn about the divine nature.



## *Section Summary*

The preceding section has examined a variety of aspects which are essential to Anselm's greater cosmology. The categories of beauty, fittingness, and truth, as well as freedom and rationality are essential concepts not only for understanding Anselm's theology more generally, but also for understanding how Anselm presents his account of sin and redemption. The logic which Anselm uses in his theology of both sin and God's redemption are rooted in his aesthetic cosmology. Likewise, his account of sin and redemption is also heavily influenced by his understanding of freedom and rationality, both of which are essential for a sinful or a righteous act. Below, I will show not only how Anselm describes sin in light of such a cosmology, but also show how the logic of Anselm's aesthetic cosmology has significant implications once the concept of sin is extended to include the effects of sin in the rest of the created order (via the Fall), implications which Anselm himself did not consider. Next, in turning to God's redemptive act in the incarnation, I will show how the same logic, in light of a recognition of a cosmic Fall, requires that the incarnation's salvation is extended to the nonhuman creation.

## **Section 2: Sin**

### *Introduction*

For Anselm, to understand the incarnation requires understanding sin. In this second section the topic of sin and fallenness will be examined in detail and the findings of this study will enable a richer understanding of how Anselm expresses the restorative overcoming of sin as *the* driving rationale for God's incarnation as a human. Though this section will examine a large number of topics connected to sin, the key thread in this section is the relation of sin and creation in Anselm's thought, which in light of his aesthetic cosmology examined above, I will argue is problematic in failing to address the cosmic Fall of creation. The main way in which Anselm describes sin is a dishonouring of God brought about by a creature with a rational will. Sin for Anselm, is only in the will (though original sin is passed on biologically). Such a focus on sin and its relation only to the rational will means that unlike other theologians who differentiate between natural and moral evil (such as Augustine), Anselm's theology of sin is unable to account for a fallen creation. Despite this, his theology of truth as 'doing what one ought' is capable of taking on this missing element though Anselm himself did not do so. If creation as a whole is seen as fallen, then whenever a

creature (rational or not) does not exist as God intended it to, it can be conceived of as existing in a state contrary to the will of God. Such a state, though willed or not, would still need addressing as Anselm's aesthetic cosmology demands, requiring that the beauty of creation which was disturbed by humans be fully brought to order.

Before turning to the more specific parts and related elements of sin in the theology of Anselm, it is useful to have a general understanding of how Anselm conceives of sin. Anselm discusses sin in slightly different ways in his different works, e.g. in *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm prefers to speak of the nature of sin, whereas in *On the Virgin Conception and Original Sin* he writes about its mode of transmission.<sup>163</sup> Despite such differences, Anselm's idea of sin is fairly consistent throughout. Within *Cur Deus Homo* Anselm gives his most famous definition of sin: 'To sin is nothing other than not to give God what is owed to him.'<sup>164</sup> Slightly further on Anselm expands upon this definition: 'Someone who does not render to God this honour due him is taking away from God what is his, and dishonouring God, and this is what it is to sin.'<sup>165</sup> To sin then is to dishonour God by failing to give Him what is due to Him. What is due God is perfect obedience: 'For every rational creature owes this [submitting oneself to God's will by upholding righteousness] obedience to God.'<sup>166</sup> In failing to live perfectly with righteousness, truth, justice, etc., rational creatures do not render what they ought to God, and so sin. Such an understanding requires three additional points for clarification. First, it is crucial to understand that for Anselm, sinning requires a rational will; it is only through the rational will that sin is possible, and it is only in the will that sin exists.<sup>167</sup> Second, through sinning, the effects extend beyond the human and divine relationship. Anselm explains that when a human dishonours God, they are 'disturbing, as far as [they are] able, the order and beauty of the universe.'<sup>168</sup> Thus through sin, the order and beauty of the cosmos which was shown to be such an important aspect of Anselm's cosmology, is thrown into disorder. As will be discussed, such disruption of cosmic beauty has implications for Anselm's subsequent soteriology in both its rationale and the means by which restoration is brought about. Third, it is also helpful to note that for Anselm, as for Augustine before him, evil and sin lack any ontological reality.<sup>169</sup> Within *On the Virgin*

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<sup>163</sup> Evans, *Anselm and Talking About God*, 174.

<sup>164</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>165</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>166</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>167</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3, 4, 7, 15, 19.

<sup>168</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15. See also Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 4, 31; Nieuwenhove, *An Introduction to Medieval Theology*, 96; Ables, 'St Anselm', 148.

<sup>169</sup> Augustine, *Saint Augustine's Enchiridion*, IV.1-38. Translated by Ernest Evans. London: SPCK, 1953.

*Conception and Original Sin*, Anselm notes both that ‘injustice has no being’ and that ‘evil is nothing’.<sup>170</sup> G. R. Evans explains ‘The desires and deeds of an unrighteous will considered in themselves are “something” (*per se considerati aliquid sunt*), but the element of unrighteousness, evil, or sin, which gives them their character, is in itself, “nothing”, *quia iniustitia nullam habet essentiam*.’<sup>171</sup> Thus while the will which sins has being, sin of itself, is nothing. Anselm’s definition of sin, with these three points in mind, provides a useful understanding of sin within Anselm’s theology. It is useful to expand on one aspect of Anselm’s understanding of sin – that of a dishonouring of God – and the reason for this is not only does dishonour make up a considerable element of Anselm’s account of sin, but ultimately the effects of such dishonouring do not impact God so much as they do God’s plans for the cosmos.

The understanding of sin given above requires more detail and expanding to allow for a fuller knowledge as to why God became incarnate as a human in particular. As just noted, sin for Anselm is to not render the honour that one owes to God, and through doing so, to dishonour the divine. Such dishonour is not to be thought of purely as some sort of personal injury against God, alike to calling him a rude name. God’s honour is never under real threat by sinners. Anselm expresses quite clearly that ‘It is impossible for God to lose his honour.’<sup>172</sup> Yet Anselm does also explicitly claim that ‘Someone who does not render to God this honour due him is taking away from God what is his, and dishonouring God, and this is what it is to sin.’<sup>173</sup> Anselm makes sense of these seemingly opposed ideas later in *Cur Deus Homo* 1.15: ‘Nothing can be added to, or subtracted from the honour of God as it relates to God himself’;<sup>174</sup> instead what happens is that the sinner ‘is disturbing, as far as [they are] able, the order and beauty of the universe. In spite of this, [they do] not harm or besmirch the honour of God to the slightest extent.’<sup>175</sup> In sinning, creatures are failing to give God honour and such an action disorders the beauty of creation. God’s honour is secure in God; it is the order and beauty of creation which should be honouring God which sin harms.<sup>176</sup> What this means is that ‘Sin dishonours God, not in the sense of detracting from his actual dignity in himself, but in the sense of preventing or perverting the honouring of God that is the centre

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<sup>170</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 5.

<sup>171</sup> Evans, *Anselm and Talking about God*, 182-83.

<sup>172</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.14.

<sup>173</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>174</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15.

<sup>175</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15.

<sup>176</sup> Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 287.

and height of the order of creation.<sup>177</sup> God's honour, *in and of itself*, is thus never in danger. Yet though God's honour is maintained and never in any real danger, God's plans for the cosmos are, for the cosmos have become tainted by sin. God's will for the creation and the way in which it was made to honour Him are connected, and this connection provides a very real rationale in Anselm's theology for God's incarnation and the redemption it enables as will be made clear in the third section. Yet before turning to the solution, there is more that needs to be addressed with regards to sin, including examining in more detail each of the three main groups of creatures – the angelic, the human, and the nonhuman animal – with regards to what makes them unique and in particular, where they stand in relation to sin. Knowing what the similarities and distinctions of each creaturely group are, allows for a better understanding of how Anselm's theology of sin and redemption works (or does not work) for each group. As will be shown below, in light of his aesthetic cosmology, the way in which Anselm constructs his theology of sin and fallenness (which affects two creaturely groups) and redemption (which affects only humans), is too narrow to account for a fallen creation as described in the Bible, and thus needs rectifying.

### *Creaturely Capacity to Sin*

The first broad group of creatures I will examine are the angels,<sup>178</sup> and though obvious, it perhaps requires stating that they, alike to nonhuman animals, are nonhuman creatures and so understanding how they fare in Anselm's account of sin will be informative with regards to nonhuman animals. Despite the fact that angels are spiritual creatures, the main way in which Anselm discusses angels is most often through their commonalities to humans through the shared capacities which both possess. Thus angels are seen by Anselm to be rational creatures,<sup>179</sup> and as well are also creatures that possess free will.<sup>180</sup> As free and rational creatures, alike to humans, this entails a calling to living in rectitude and ultimately following the will of God. As creatures with free will and rationality, angels owe their will to be subject to God.<sup>181</sup> Yet, given Anselm's understanding of freedom, and the distinction he makes between choosing rectitude for its own sake, and the related power to choose between

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<sup>177</sup> Holmes, 'The Upholding of Beauty', 197. See also Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 200.

<sup>178</sup> It is worth noting Anselm's rejection of the view that the Devil, as a fallen angel, had rights over the creation, and that Christ's incarnation was an attempt at gaining sinful humans back from the Devil, who was their rightful owner (see *CDH*, 1.7, 2.19; '11th Meditation' from *St. Anselm's Book of Meditations and Prayers*. Translated by M.R. London: Burns and Gates, 1872, § 51).

<sup>179</sup> For Anselm's description of angels as rational creatures, see *On the Fall of the Devil*, 5, 7, 12, 22, and 23, as well as *CDH*, 1.16.

<sup>180</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 2; *On the Incarnation of the Word*, ch. 10.

<sup>181</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

various options, angels are also capable of choosing between good and evil.<sup>182</sup> Yet here the similarities between the angelic and the human end. Though both are rational and both possess freedom and the capacity to choose right or wrong, Anselm understands there to be significant creaturely differences between these two groups. Two main differences can be found in Anselm's writings which have implications towards his theology of the incarnation. The first is that angels share the same nature, but are not related in any biological sense.<sup>183</sup> Anselm writes, 'angels are not of one race as human beings are. For angels are not all descended from one angel in the same way that human beings are descended from one man.'<sup>184</sup> Thus unlike humans, who are all descended through the line of Adam and Eve, angels were created by God without any participation of the angels through whom a biological or family connection might be made. The second difference between angels and humans is that unlike humans, the choices made by the angels are set and there is no going back: 'The angels are divided into those who, adhering to justice, can enjoy all the goods they will, and those who, having abandoned justice, are deprived of whatever good they desire.'<sup>185</sup> Angels, unlike humans this side of God's judgement, are either good or bad and there is no movement between these two states. Though they are nonhuman, angels are rational creatures with freedom of will, and through possessing such capacities they are distinguished from nonhuman animals. The implications of such a difference will be quite clear when the means of addressing sin and its effects in the world is addressed below.

The second category of creatures which Anselm discusses is nonhuman animals, and the way in which he does so distinguishes them significantly from the angelic and human. The clarification "nonhuman" is necessary, for Anselm understands humans to be animals, albeit uniquely rational animals.<sup>186</sup> Such commonality, however, is generally not brought to the fore by Anselm, who when he does discuss nonhuman animals, does so in ways which distinguish them from humans. The most significant ways in which nonhuman animals differ from humans (and angels) in Anselm's view is their lack of rationality and free will. Within *On the Virgin Conception* Anselm states that 'Only God, angels, and the soul of man are rational...'<sup>187</sup> Likewise, just as Anselm occasionally refers to humans as 'rational animals',<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 2; *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 3; *On the Incarnation of the Word*, ch. 10; *CDH*, 2.10.

<sup>183</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.21.

<sup>184</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.21.

<sup>185</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 6.

<sup>186</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 10.

<sup>187</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3.

<sup>188</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 10.

so too he also refers to nonhuman animals as ‘irrational animals.’<sup>189</sup> In addition to lacking rationality, Anselm also suggests that nonhuman animals lack free will. Here Anselm seems to be suggesting varying positions. It is important to keep in mind the distinctions above that were highlighted in respect to freedom. Nonhuman animals lack freedom in so far as they lack ‘the capacity for preserving rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude itself.’<sup>190</sup>

Lacking rationality, nonhuman animals also lack the means by which to will rectitude for its own sake. This is not to say that nonhuman animals have no form of knowledge, or that they lack a will which can choose. Anselm seems to suggest they have both of these. For instance, Anselm states that animals (both human and nonhuman) can know ‘through a bodily sense-faculty.’<sup>191</sup> As well, Anselm suggests that nonhuman animals can have and maintain rectitude of will naturally, e.g. when a dog loves its young or master.<sup>192</sup> Yet despite this, Anselm also suggests that nonhuman animals lack free will, and that they are instead slaves of their sense appetites. Regarding a horse rightly willing to serve its appetite, Anselm states ‘For in the horse there is not the will to subject himself, but naturally, always and of necessity he is the slave of sense appetite.’<sup>193</sup> The clearest way of combining these two views is to understand that for Anselm, the will of a nonhuman animal is a ‘natural’ will, one driven by nature and the way in which God has made each creature. Anselm does not deny that various nonhuman creatures desire to eat, or play, or to love their young. Likewise, he does not deny that these are positive things for the creatures. Yet given that such a will is driven not by a freedom to choose the greatest good for the sake of that good, such a will is not to be understood as free. A dog may have a will which allows it to love its young and do what it should, but this will cannot choose to do such things for the sake of righteousness.

There are greater implications for Anselm’s theology of nonhuman animals that follow from the idea that they lack rationality and freedom. On the one hand, they lack those attributes which are directly linked with rationality and freedom, such as justice. Recalling that ‘justice’ for Anselm is rectitude, not of action, but of will, nonhuman animals simply

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<sup>189</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 13. Such a distinction, though quite common throughout the Christian tradition, is increasingly being questioned by the work of scientists of nonhuman animal studies, philosophers, and even theologians. See the work of Marc Bekoff (*Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals*, 2009), Peter Singer (*Animal Liberation*, 1975), and David Clough (*On Animals*, 2012) for three such examples. This is an idea which will be addressed with more concern in the third chapter which addresses humans as microcosms. For now, we can proceed with Anselm’s theology as it stands keeping in mind the strict rational line he has drawn between humans and nonhuman animals may not be as decisive as he understood it to be.

<sup>190</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 13.

<sup>191</sup> Anselm, *Proslogion*, ch. 6.

<sup>192</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 13.

<sup>193</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 5.

cannot possess justice. They may do the right thing, but they cannot will the right thing for the sake of the right, as humans and angels may do. Unlike humans or angels, however, nonhuman animals share no blame in not possessing this: ‘The absence of justice is not blamed where justice is not meant to be. Just as not having a beard is no disgrace in a man who does not yet have one, so not having justice does not deform a nature that ought not to have it.’<sup>194</sup> Likewise, given that nonhuman animals cannot possess justice, Anselm states that they cannot be thought of as evil. He writes that ‘If to will lesser pleasures were evil, the will of brute animals would be called evil. But the will of the irrational animal is not said to be evil because they are not unjust.’<sup>195</sup> This has significant issues when the topic of injustice and sin is brought in, both with regards to whether nonhuman animals can be thought of as sinful or fallen in any way, as well as if they are in need of any sort of redemption.<sup>196</sup>

The final group of creatures within Anselm’s cosmology, the human, are the creatures most central to our inquiry into the incarnation. This centrality is based upon the reality that in the incarnation, Jesus took on our true humanity.<sup>197</sup> Yet the human is also the creature in Anselm’s mind that is most important to God. Anselm writes in *Cur Deus Homo* that the human race is ‘clearly [God’s] most precious piece of workmanship.’<sup>198</sup> Though he does little to justify his claim here, elsewhere in his *I<sup>st</sup> Meditation*, he states that God ‘determined to lavish richer honours on man’s nature than on all other creations in the universe. Behold thy lofty origin, and bethink thee of the due of love thou owest thy Creator. “Let Us make man,” said God, “to Our Image and Likeness” (Gen. i. 26.).’<sup>199</sup> Thus humanity’s rich honours are based upon their being made in God’s image. Despite this claim, Anselm spends very little space anywhere in detailing his thoughts on humans as images of God, and it seems something accepted by Anselm, rather than a theology built and defended by him.<sup>200</sup> Beyond

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<sup>194</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 16.

<sup>195</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 19.

<sup>196</sup> It must be said that though Anselm does not understand nonhuman animals to possess those attributes which he most highly values, he nevertheless does not have a negative view towards animals. Not only does Anselm (*Meditation 13*) use animal imagery to describe Christ, but Anselm, as told through his biographer, also took an interest in caring for nonhuman creatures (Eadmer, *The Life of St Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury*, edited and translated by R.W. Southern. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, ch. 17). In addition, Anselm remarks (*CDH*, 1.18) that we dare not say that even a worm was created superfluous.

<sup>197</sup> Anselm, *6<sup>th</sup> Meditation*.

<sup>198</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.4.

<sup>199</sup> Anselm, *I<sup>st</sup> Meditation*.

<sup>200</sup> Humans as made in God’s image, especially as it relates to God’s rationale for becoming human, is a topic which will be addressed in the second chapter of this thesis through the writings of Gregory of Nyssa. Though Anselm goes into little detail as to the nature of the image of God, he shares with Gregory of Nyssa the understanding that the human creation in the image of God denotes the highest of honours of all God’s created things (e.g. *On the Making of Man*, 3.1-2).

being made in God's image, Anselm also describes humans as possessing immortal souls.<sup>201</sup> He describes this in two different ways in two different texts. Within *Monologion* Anselm claims that the human soul is immortal – 'The soul, therefore, (whether it loves or loathes what it was created to love) must necessarily be immortal.'<sup>202</sup> This idea is nuanced within *Cur Deus Homo* where Anselm states: 'I do not think that mortality is a property of pure human nature, rather of human nature which is corrupt.'<sup>203</sup> Though Anselm does occasionally refer to humans as mortal, this is done in light of the fact that they are fallen – mortality does not constitute a necessary part of human nature. Indeed, if it did, Anselm suggests that God could never have become human.<sup>204</sup> Yet as important as these concepts are for describing the human, they are used more as background information than as crucial topics which Anselm engages with. Far more important to the mind of Anselm is the human capacity for rationality and freedom.

Human rationality is a key concept for Anselm in defining who humans are. Though Anselm never rejects understanding humans as animals, they are distinguished from all other nonhuman animals as being the 'rational animal'.<sup>205</sup> Anselm tends to have quite a positive view of human nature as rational, and suggests that 'it is characteristic of humans to want nothing without reason.'<sup>206</sup> Likewise, humans as rational creatures are capable of distinguishing good from evil, but beyond that even have a natural preference for the good.<sup>207</sup> The highest good, quite naturally for Anselm, is God, and as rational creatures humans are made to love the divine: 'Now the human soul is a rational creature. No doubt about it. Therefore, necessarily, it was created to love the supreme essence.'<sup>208</sup> Such a statement is based on Anselm's earlier claim that 'to be able to be conscious of, understand and love the supreme good is [the rational creature's] most momentous ability. And therefore the most momentous debt that it owes its Creator is to want to be conscious of, understand and love the supreme good.'<sup>209</sup> Loving the divine essence is therefore part of the very calling of what it means to be a rational creature. In addition to being rational animals however, humans also

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<sup>201</sup> Though Anselm states outright that humans possess immortal souls, he simply does not explicitly comment on the immortal nature of either angels or nonhuman animals. It would seem likely in keeping with the majority of the Christian tradition, that he would view angels as immortal creatures, and nonhuman animals as mortal.

<sup>202</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 72.

<sup>203</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>204</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>205</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 10.

<sup>206</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 10.

<sup>207</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.1; Evans, *Anselm and Talking About God*, 146.

<sup>208</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 69.

<sup>209</sup> Anselm, *Monologion*, ch. 68.



possess free will.<sup>210</sup> Along with these two capacities humans possess all the related capacities which come along with rationality and freedom as discussed above (e.g. living with rectitude, truth, and justice).

Beyond the capacities which humans have, Anselm also devotes a portion of his writing to the nature of humanity more generally, and how such nature is passed on. For Anselm, the ‘whole of human nature was contained in Adam and Eve, and nothing of it existed outside of them.’<sup>211</sup> If the first humans had remained virtuous then so would the whole of human nature.<sup>212</sup> Yet clearly for Anselm this did not occur, and sin entered into the world. For humans, Anselm understands there to be two main types of sin, original sin and personal sin.<sup>213</sup> Original sin (also referred to as natural sin) is a sin which exists in the origin (hence original sin) of each person.<sup>214</sup> This origin is found in Adam and Eve. Due to the way in which the ‘whole of human nature was contained in Adam and Eve, and nothing of it existed outside of them, the whole of human nature was weakened and corrupted.’<sup>215</sup> Because Adam and Eve were the only humans, and the ‘whole nature of the human race was inherent in its first parents; human nature was as a result entirely defeated in them with the consequence that it became sinful.’<sup>216</sup> Anselm takes the time to be clear as to how original sin both is, and is not, based on human nature. It is based on human nature because it is through the fallen human nature that original sin exists. Yet, because it does not belong to true human nature in its essence, Anselm also claims that original sin does not have its root in human nature (for if it did, humans would not be to blame).<sup>217</sup> Anselm, however, is more specific with regards to original sin than its basis in a fallen human nature. Due to the fact that sin requires a rational will, the same must be true for original sin.<sup>218</sup> Thus it is not in the seed that original sin exists, any more than it does in spit or blood;<sup>219</sup> it is only in the will that original sin can be

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<sup>210</sup> See for example Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 1, 2, 11, 14 and *CDH*, 1.14.

<sup>211</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 2. See also *CDH*, 1.18.

<sup>212</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.18.

<sup>213</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 1. For Anselm’s similarity and difference on this subject with Augustine, see Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury* 303-07. For more general influence of Augustine on Anselm, see Hogg, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 12-15; 66-74, 80-83.

<sup>214</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 1.

<sup>215</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 2.

<sup>216</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.18.

<sup>217</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 1.

<sup>218</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3.

<sup>219</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 7. See also Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 304.

found.<sup>220</sup> Such a corruption of human nature means that original sin is less a direct action against God, than it is failing to live in the rectitude and justice that God intends for humans.<sup>221</sup> Near the end of *On the Virgin Conception and Original Sin* Anselm distinguishes between this sort of sin, and personal sin.<sup>222</sup> Here, not only does Anselm distinguish original sin from personal sin, but shows how intimately they are related. Just as Adam and Eve committed personal sins which affected their nature, so too do the descendants of Adam and Eve due to a corrupted nature commit personal sins. Humans are all equally sinful through original sin (due to their failing to live as God intended), but their personal sin is what gets added by their own negative choices in life. Both types of sin are indeed sins, and thus both need to be addressed.

Given Anselm's understanding of sin as discussed so far, it becomes clear that the creatures capable of sinning are limited to the angelic and the human. Anselm repeatedly discusses both of these groups as sinful, most significantly throughout *On Free Will*, *On the Fall of the Devil*, *Cur Deus Homo*, and *On the Virgin Conception and Original Sin*. Indeed, as can be seen from their titles, these works as a whole are focused on the reality of sin in both the human and angelic. As noted above, the reason why it is humans and angels which are the creatures Anselm describes as capable of sin, is that these creatures are the ones which have both free will and rationality. Such common capacities mean that the reality for sin exists for both groups. Nonhuman animals by Anselm's account lack rationality (though not will) and he repeatedly denies their capabilities to be anything evil, unjust, or sinful. For instance, Anselm writes that 'Injustice cannot exist except where justice ought to be – therefore only in the rational can injustice exist,'<sup>223</sup> and again that 'the will of the irrational animal is not said to be evil because they are not unjust.'<sup>224</sup> Thus given Anselm's sole focus on sin as an attribute of the rational free will, it follows that nonhuman animals are therefore denied anything related to a concept of sin which requires freedom and rationality, or even to be considered fallen by the effects of sin upon them. Humans and angels therefore, are the only creatures capable of sinning for

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<sup>220</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3, 7.

<sup>221</sup> Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 305.

<sup>222</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 23.

<sup>223</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 3.

<sup>224</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 19. Just as Anselm denies sin to nonhuman animals, he more broadly denies morality to them as well, and claims (*On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 13) that life and being endowed with senses do not involve morality and are neither good nor evil.

Anselm, and the implications of this are seen when the consequences of sin are examined.

### *Consequences of Sin*

The presence of sin has three main consequences, two of which Anselm discusses in detail, while the third is absent from his writings. The first two consequences of sin can be found in the impact which sin has within the rational realm (angelic and human), both upon the creature itself, as well as its relation to God. While Anselm does discuss the implications of sin for the angels (they are forever lost as a result of their sin),<sup>225</sup> he goes into much greater detail on this topic with regards to humans. The human rational mind has been ‘so effaced and worn away by vice, so darkened by the smoke of sin, that it cannot do what it was made to do unless [God] renews and reforms it.’<sup>226</sup> Likewise human freedom, though still present in the human, is unable to be used without an additional external grace which God can provide.<sup>227</sup> Linked with the loss of the full capacities of the rational mind and freedom, humans also propagate differently due to sin: ‘If human nature had not sinned, it would have been propagated as God had made it: thus after its sin, it is propagated according to what it has made of itself by sinning.’<sup>228</sup> Thus instead of a fully rational-based procreation, humans now procreate alike to nonhuman animals.<sup>229</sup> Even death is a result of sin, though not as an intrinsic consequence of it (as though sin had some ontological connection to death), but rather as a punitive measure by God.<sup>230</sup> In this range of ways then, sin has had a significant effect on humans. Such aspects, however, are not inconsequential elements of human nature. In affecting the rationality and freedom which so defines human nature, sin disables the capacity for humans to do what they were created to do. Recalling that humans have rationality such that they can know and love the good and beautiful (especially the highest good, God), sin impedes this capacity such that humans are no longer able to live in truth – to live as God intended them to. Not only are humans incapable of knowing and loving God as intended, but their ‘sinfulness clouds the vision [they] would otherwise have of a beautiful and orderly universe.’<sup>231</sup> Thus sin has such an impact on humans they can neither know God nor the relative beauty of what God has made within the cosmos. As negative as this appears,

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<sup>225</sup> Anselm, *On the Fall of the Devil*, ch. 6.

<sup>226</sup> Anselm, *Proslogion*, ch. 1.

<sup>227</sup> Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 3.

<sup>228</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 2.

<sup>229</sup> Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, 307.

<sup>230</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.22; Rodger, ‘The Soteriology of Anselm’, 28.

<sup>231</sup> Evans, *Talking About God*, 146.

these are simply the impacts which sin has upon the human and their abilities. Far greater in the mind of Anselm is the impact which sin has upon the relationship between the sinner and God.

By failing to live an obedient life, a life led by rationality which freely sought out the good and rejected the bad, humans have dishonoured God and so affected their relationship with God. Humans have brought disorder into the cosmos, and have marred the beauty of God's creation. Through their sinful actions, humans have dishonoured their Creator and are thus, argues Anselm, under an obligation to make amends. Anselm writes that 'everyone who sins is under an obligation to repay to God the honour which he has violently taken from him, and this is the satisfaction which every sinner is obliged to give to God.'<sup>232</sup> Given the reality of original sin, this debt is true for every single human being (with the exception of Christ) including infants.<sup>233</sup> Such repayment, in keeping with Anselm's emphasis on aesthetics, is fitting for humans to perform.<sup>234</sup> A simple repayment of the debt is not enough however: 'It is not sufficient merely to repay what has been taken away: rather [one] ought to pay back more than [they] took, in proportion to the insult which [one] has inflicted.'<sup>235</sup> Given that it is God who has been dishonoured, the repayment must include significantly more than what was taken.<sup>236</sup> Here it becomes abundantly clear that humans, even ignoring their sinful state which leaves their capacities for rationality, freedom, rectitude, etc. lacking, are wholly unable to repay such a debt. Anselm repeatedly states that humans simply lack the capacity to repay what they owe.<sup>237</sup> Because humans already owe God perfect obedience, even if they were to return to perfect obedience, this would not reduce the damage done. Salvation 'could not have been brought about unless man repaid what he owed to God. This debt was so large that, although no one but man owed it, only God was capable of repaying it.'<sup>238</sup> Thus humans have taken on a debt which they are wholly unable to repay, yet repayment must be made in order for redemption to be achieved. It is in recognition of such a state that the incarnation shows itself to be of the utmost importance within Anselm's soteriology. Here ends Anselm's understanding of the consequences of sin more broadly. Yet as noted above there is a third way in which sin has affected creation, and this is by distorting the cosmos themselves

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<sup>232</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>233</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 2, 8.

<sup>234</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>235</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.11.

<sup>236</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.20.

<sup>237</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.20, 1.22; *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 2, 8.

<sup>238</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.18.

through the effects of human sin in creation brought about by the Fall, a topic which Anselm does not attend to yet which the logic of his aesthetic theology requires is addressed.

### *The Fall*

Thus far this section has addressed the nature of sin, and the creatures which Anselm understands to be sinful and fallen. It was noted near the beginning that Anselm's theology of sin, though quite detailed, is too narrow in its scope. For Anselm, it is the rational will alone which is capable of sin, and so only humans and angels can be understood as sinful. Indeed, so strongly does Anselm link sin with the will that not even an action done by a rational will is sinful – only the will is.<sup>239</sup> Yet due to such specificity, Anselm's theology of sin lacks the capacity to understand the effects of sin as shown in a fallen creation described in the Bible, as well as verses which speak of a redemption from a fallen state which extends beyond the human. Anselm himself seems to have given little thought to such a state, and the logical implications this would have for his theology of the incarnation. Yet before detailing how Anselm's theology might still be in some ways capable of incorporating a cosmic Fall, it is worth examining the claim that creation is indeed fallen, and so would stand in need of restoration for God's beautiful creation to be what it was intended to be.

Though there are a range of biblical verses which are commonly referred to in reference to a cosmic fall,<sup>240</sup> a significant one found in the New Testament is Romans 8:19-22. The text of Romans 8:19-22 reads as follows:

<sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup>for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now;<sup>241</sup>

There are a number of important ideas which commentators have focused on which are relevant to the current discussion. First, the word translated 'creation' (ἡ κτίσις) has

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<sup>239</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch.4.

<sup>240</sup> The Fall is first described in Genesis 3, in which the snake is punished for its role, and the ground is also said to be cursed as a result of the human sin. Later eschatological verses such as Isaiah 11:6-11 describe all animals (human and nonhuman) returning to a state of peace with one another. For more on this see David Clough, *On Animals*, ch. 6.

<sup>241</sup> Romans 8:19-22, NRSV.

traditionally had a range of groups associated with it. C. E. B. Cranfield notes eight different meanings which have been used involving various combinations of humans (believers and non-believers) angels, and the nonhuman creation (both animate and inanimate).<sup>242</sup> Though such a range of views have been held in the past, the most commonly accepted views seem to be that ‘creation’ either refers to the nonhuman creation alone,<sup>243</sup> or, if the unbelieving humans are included, then at least the emphasis is on the nonhuman creation.<sup>244</sup> Thus it is at least primarily the nonhuman creation which Paul has in mind here, and which has been ‘subjected to futility’. This phrase is another important aspect of understanding this verse for this chapter. Though not without exception, as James Dunn notes ‘There is now a general agreement that ὑπετάγη is a divine passive (subjected by God) with reference particularly to Gen 3:17-18.’<sup>245</sup> This verse from Genesis is descriptive of the punishment given by God following the fall of humans, in which both humans and nonhuman creation are cursed. Regarding the meaning of ματαιότης, Cranfield suggests that

The simplest and most straightforward interpretation would be to take ματαιότης here in the word’s basic sense as denoting the ineffectiveness of that which does not attain its goal, and to understand Paul’s meaning to be that the sub-human creation has been subjected to the frustration of not being able properly to fulfil the purpose of its existence.<sup>246</sup>

Cranfield’s suggested interpretation matches well with that of others,<sup>247</sup> and is descriptive of the effects of the fall of humanity extending to include the nonhuman creation. Thus it is not just humanity (nor the rational creation) which has fallen from God’s intended goal. The whole of creation exists in a state of ‘futility’ whereby it is unable to exist as God intends for it to. Though Anselm would never understand such a state of futility as ‘sinful’, given his

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<sup>242</sup> Cranfield, C. E. B. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987, 411.

<sup>243</sup> Cranfield, *Romans*, 411.

<sup>244</sup> Käsemann, Ernest. *Commentary on Romans*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990, 233; Hendriksen, William. *Romans. Vol. 1 Chapters 1-8*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1982, 266; Dunn, James D. G. *Romans 1-8*. Dallas: Word Books, 1988, 469.

<sup>245</sup> Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 470. For others of this view see Cranfield (*Romans*, 413), Hendriksen (*Romans*, 267-68), and Roger Bowen (*A Guide to Romans*. London: SPCK, 1990, 111). For a view which is agnostic towards the basis for the futility, see C. K. Barrett (*The Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed. London: A & C Black, 1991, 155-56).

<sup>246</sup> Cranfield, *Romans*, 413.

<sup>247</sup> For example Käsemann (*Romans*, 233) notes that ‘According to v. 20 creation has to suffer the consequences of man’s fall,’ while Hendriksen (*Romans*, 268) states ‘that since man’s fall Nature’s potentialities are cribbed, cabined, and confined. The creation is subject to arrested development and constant decay. Though it aspires, it is not able fully to achieve.’

requirement for rationality to constitute sin, such an existence for creation is clearly contrary to the will which God has for it.

Additional scriptural support for understanding the whole of creation to be fallen can be found in the book of Colossians, where the Fall is not explicitly mentioned, yet the logic of what is described necessitates such an event. The relevant text of Colossians is 1:15-20 which reads:

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup>for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

As Peter O'Brien explains,

The opening words of the paragraph have asserted that all things – the various heavenly bodies, thrones, lordships, principalities, powers and so on – were created in Christ, through him and for him. He is their Lord in creation. What is not spelt out, however, is what has happened to all things *since* creation. Although there has been no previous mention of it, the presupposition is that the unity and harmony of the cosmos have suffered a considerable dislocation, even a rupture, thus requiring reconciliation.<sup>248</sup>

Here O'Brien describes the logic, that just as the author of Colossians is claiming a universal restoration for 'all things', so too must the author believe in a need for a restoration for 'all things.' F. F. Bruce likewise notes that 'If "all things" in heaven and on earth, were created through him (v. 16) and yet "all things" – "whether the things on earth or those in heaven" – have to be reconciled to God through him, it follows that all things have been estranged

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<sup>248</sup> O'Brien, Peter. *Colossians, Ephesians*. Waco: Word Books, 1982, 53.

from their Creator.’<sup>249</sup> Given such a logic, it seems clear that the group which entails ‘all things’, is currently in a position in which it stands in need of reconciliation. A pertinent question remains however, to determine who is included within the phrase ‘all things’.

In these few verses is a description of a cosmic Christ, one in whom all things are created (vs. 16) all things are sustained (vs. 17), and all things are redeemed (vs. 20). Here, the phrase of significant importance is τὰ πάντα or ‘all things’, and it is repeated throughout the selection. Both Ralph Martin and O’Brien note a range of options for interpreting τὰ πάντα including (a) all humans and all angels, (b) all humans, (c) pacification and subjugation of hostile powers, (d) rejection of the idea that there should be any concern with focusing on who is reconciled in favour of who is reconciling, and (e) that ‘all things’ does in fact refer to the whole of creation, including not only all humans and all angels, but all of creation.<sup>250</sup> Of these various views, it is the fifth one, which suggests it refers to the whole cosmos and everything in it, which is to be preferred.<sup>251</sup> Not only is this view well supported by both biblical exegetes<sup>252</sup> and theologians,<sup>253</sup> but the logic of the selection also strongly pushes this interpretation. As noted above, what is found within is a cosmic Christ through whom ‘all things’ are created, sustained, and redeemed. In addition it is the same ‘all things’ which Christ has authority over. To limit ‘all things’ within verse 20 to only humans, angels, or hostile powers, is to seriously limit what is being claimed about Christ, and leads to an awkward reading of the preceding passages. Jürgen Moltmann expands on the idea of a cosmic interpretation and suggests that:

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<sup>249</sup> Bruce, F.F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984, 74. See also Andrew Lincoln (*Paradise Now and Not Yet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, 120), where he writes that ‘The implication of the use of ἀποκαταλλάσσειν is of course that at some point the cosmos with its harmonious relationship between heaven and earth had been put out of joint and hostile elements entered so that the whole of created reality became in need of reconciliation through Christ. Harmony has now been restored as God through Christ has reconciled all things to himself.’

<sup>250</sup> Martin, Ralph P. *Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1992, 60; O’Brien, *Colossians, Ephesians*, 54-56. Martin lists the first 3, while O’Brien lists all 5.

<sup>251</sup> Though the fifth is to be preferred, the fourth option is a point which needs to be taken – clearly the figure of utmost importance in these verses is Christ. Noting his importance however, does not necessitate the need to reject importance of other aspects of these verses.

<sup>252</sup> O’Brien, *Colossians, Ephesians*, 55-56; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 74; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 104; Grabe, Petrus. ‘Salvation in Colossians and Ephesians’ from *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*. Edited by Jan G. van der Watt. Leiden: Brill, 2005, 290-93; Foulkes, Francis. *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*. London: Tyndale Press, 1963, 53; Wright, N.T., *Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1986, 76-80.

<sup>253</sup> Edwards, ‘Every Sparrow that Falls to the Ground’, 111; Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. London: SCM Press, 1990, 194, 255; Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet*, 120.



Through Christ everything will be reconciled “whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross, through himself” (1.20). According to what is said here, Christ did not only die vicariously the death of suffering men and women, and ‘the death of the sinner’, so as to bring peace into the world of human beings. He also died ‘the death of all the living’ so as to reconcile everything in heaven and on earth, which means the angels and the beasts too, and to bring peace to the whole creation.<sup>254</sup>

Thus these verses, and verse 20 in particular, provide further scriptural support for the idea of a creation which is not currently living as God intends for it to – a fallen creation which stands in need of reconciliation. Just as in the case of Romans 8 above, Anselm would not have understood the nonhuman creation to stand in need of reconciliation, and likewise, did not understand creation beyond the human and angelic as fallen. In this, Anselm is not alone. Given that the view of creation as fallen is not a universally accepted idea within Christian theology, a brief aside is worthwhile before continuing with Anselm.

Christopher Southgate represents a view which denies the reality of the Fall due to perceived difficulties brought about through the theory of evolution. Southgate states that ‘the scientific record of Earth’s long history before the advent of human beings calls into profound question any account that regards human sin as the cause of struggle and suffering in the nonhuman creation in general.’<sup>255</sup> At the core of his issue with the concept of a cosmic Fall are two concerns. The first is highlighted from the quotation above, and essentially claims that science has shown there was no perfection from which we (or any other part of creation) has fallen. The second is that the processes which are considered ‘fallen’ (predation, pain, death) are the very same through which evolution occurs.<sup>256</sup> It is suggested by Southgate that our current universe, with all its pain and death, is ‘the only sort of universe that could give rise to the range, beauty, complexity, and diversity of creatures the Earth has produced.’<sup>257</sup> Given this, the processes of evolution which seem evil, are created by God to enable creation to become what it has been. This is not to say that Southgate promotes death

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<sup>254</sup> Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 255.

<sup>255</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 28.

<sup>256</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 29.

<sup>257</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 29. Southgate later (31) asks his reader to ‘suppose that the only way to arrive at certain good features of creation, including freely choosing self-conscious creatures, was via a route involving creaturely suffering.’ Yet there is nothing said of what the implications which this idea would have when the topic of angels is brought in. If such valuable features of creation can only come about through creaturely evolution and suffering, this would imply a significantly different understanding of the angelic realm.

and pain as inherently positive things – he suggests that there will be an eschatological reckoning where all the pains suffered will be addressed<sup>258</sup> – but it is to say that such things as pain, carnivorousness, etc., are an inherent part of God’s creative project. A direct implication of rejecting creation as fallen, and of understanding carnivorousness as an inherent part of God’s creative project is how some of the eschatological images found in the Bible are capable of being understood. Southgate suggests that ‘it is very hard to make use of the eschatological visions we find in Isaiah (e.g., 11:6, the leopard lying down with the kid),’ and that equally ‘it is very hard to see how the leopardness of leopards could be fulfilled in eschatological coexistence with kids.’<sup>259</sup>

Southgate’s concerns, and the resulting implication, can be addressed in a number of ways. With regards to the first concern focused on the reality of evolution, Neil Messer examines three ways of approaching evolution within the Christian tradition which seek to retain a traditional understanding of the Fall. The first is illustrated by creationists, who simply deny the reality of evolution.<sup>260</sup> While such a view is not philosophically impossible, such a view stands in opposition to the significant amount of scientific work which claims not only an earth billions of years old, but also lends support to the process of evolution. The second approach is taken by those who seek to hold onto both an understanding of a literal Adam and Eve, while also retaining the ideas of evolution.<sup>261</sup> Here, Adam and Eve were the first human creatures imbibed with the image of God, and it was these humans who sinned against God. This view however, fails to attend to the cosmic nature of the Fall. The third way which Messer notes is that of understanding the biblical creation story and the subsequent Fall through the genre of biblical saga, an idea he utilises Barth in making.<sup>262</sup> The genre of biblical saga is one ‘in which intuition and imagination are used but in order to give prophetic witness to what has taken place by virtue of the Word of God in the (historical or pre-historical) sphere where there can be no historical proof ... The biblical saga tells us that world-history began with the pride and fall of the first man.’<sup>263</sup> Using Christ as a basis,

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<sup>258</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 31.

<sup>259</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 85-86.

<sup>260</sup> Messer, Neil. *Selfish Genes and Christian Ethics: Theological and Ethical Reflections on Evolutionary Biology*. London: SCM Press, 2007, 185.

<sup>261</sup> Messer, *Selfish Genes*, 186.

<sup>262</sup> Messer, *Selfish Genes*, 186-95.

<sup>263</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics, Volume IV, Part 1*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961, 508.

Messer suggests that ‘the point of the parallel between Christ and Adam is that our history, apart from the saving work of Christ, is a history of sin, ‘Adamic history’.<sup>264</sup>

Such a reading of the Fall narrative means that the concerns of Southgate are no longer problematic. The biblical saga of the Fall is not a modern news story, detailing step by step what happened in the past, but is instead descriptive of a reality of existence which Christ comes to save all creation from. Indeed, though it is used narratively as a description of creaturely beginning, it is even more so eschatological, and the narrative prior to the Fall is descriptive of the end goal of creation living in peace, in line with other eschatological images such as those found in Isaiah 11 and 65. Since this reading does not require a rejection of the theory of evolution, nor necessitate a prior perfection from which humans (and creation) fell, Southgate’s first concern is no longer problematic. What it offers instead is an understanding which includes evolution, yet still retains the idea that creation is not as it should be – that there is something inherently wrong with the way the current system is operating, from which we need redeeming. While Southgate suggests that God willed such a system since it was ‘the only way’ God could create such a range of creatures, he also recognises that this is an ‘unprovable assumption’. For Southgate, the fallen aspects of creation are ones which have been willed by God to occur – death, disease, and destruction are part of the creative project of God – though they and their consequences will ultimately be redeemed by God. Such a picture of God gives a very different presentation of the character of God than one which accepts evolution, yet suggests that an evolution which works through the means of predatory behaviour, entailing pain, death, and destruction at every level, is one which is inherently contrary to the will of God.<sup>265</sup> Southgate seems to recognise the impact that this has on his concept of creatures. While many within animal theology understand the eschatological images of Isaiah 11 entailing predatory and prey living in peace to be descriptive of both God’s ultimate goal for creation, as well as the true nature of what it means to be a creature of God, as noted above, Southgate finds it very difficult to make sense of such images. Indeed, it is so difficult for Southgate that he suggests the eschatological future will be one where lions will not lie down with lambs, but will instead continue to hunt them, but since pain and death will no longer exist, the lambs would

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<sup>264</sup> Messer, *Selfish Genes*, 188.

<sup>265</sup> This is not to suggest that my own approach does not entail issues of theodicy; it is merely to suggest that when the issues of theodicy are addressed (which they are not here), the character of God which one uses to approach the issues of pain and suffering is not one which actively wills to bring suffering to the whole of created reality.

not seem to mind the predation – in direct contradiction to Isaiah 11.<sup>266</sup> Not only are the concerns of Southgate unfounded, but the implications of his theology seems to run contrary to some of the eschatological images found within the Bible.

In returning to Anselm, his theology of sin simply does not have the capacity to address a cosmic Fall. His focus on sin and its relation only to the rational will lacks the distinctions other theologians have made on the subsequent effects of sin in creation via natural evil and moral evil. Augustine for example is commonly referred to as an early example of a distinction between moral and natural evil.<sup>267</sup> While Augustine often discusses sin and evil with regards to the rational will,<sup>268</sup> he also describes how non-rational things such as diseases and wounds in nonhuman animals can be understood as evil (since they are defections of good).<sup>269</sup> Though Anselm and Augustine agree in significant ways on their hamartiologies (e.g. denying ontic reality to sin, understanding sin as an act of the will), Augustine provides a more thorough account of sin in that he accounts for ‘natural evils.’ In lacking such distinctions, this means that Anselm’s theology of sin is ill-prepared to successfully address any concept of a fallen creation as described in the Bible.<sup>270</sup> Though his description of sin as disturbing the order and beauty of the earth<sup>271</sup> would seem to imply that the sin of humanity has impacts beyond humans which encompass the whole of creation, Anselm does not seem to use it in such a way. Instead, the order and beauty of the cosmos which is being disrupted is the cosmic whole which is being marred by the individual sinful wills. Rather than the whole being tarnished such that every aspect is tainted, Anselm’s

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<sup>266</sup> Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 89.

<sup>267</sup> See for example Alvin Plantinga, ‘God, Evil, and the Metaphysics of Freedom’ in *The Problem of Evil*, edited by Marilyn McCord Adams and Robert Merrihew Adams. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, 107-08; G. R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 97; and Russell, Robert John. ‘The Groaning of Creation: Does God Suffer with All Life?’ in *The Evolution of Evil*. Edited by Gaymon Bennett, et al. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008, 126. Such a choice of terms would perhaps not be appreciated by Augustine, who felt that there was no such thing as a ‘natural’ evil (‘no nature at all is evil’ – *City of God*, X.22). Since God made all natures, they are by that fact, good. Instead what Augustine did was to describe how a rational being could will something evil (itself a moral evil) which has an impact on the creation (resulting in a ‘natural evil’). This can affect either other humans (e.g. in the case of original sin which is passed on through human nature), or the nonhuman creation.

<sup>268</sup> See for example *City of God*, XI, 3, 6, 8; XIII 14.

<sup>269</sup> Augustine writes within *The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love* (XI): ‘For what is that which we call evil but the absence of good? In the bodies of animals, diseases and wounds mean nothing but the absence of health; for when a cure is effected, that does not mean that the evils which were present – namely, the diseases and wounds – go away from the body and dwell elsewhere: they altogether cease to exist; for the wound or disease is not a substance, but a defect in the fleshly substance.’

<sup>270</sup> Later theologians who take note of the implications of the Fall beyond the human and have begun to examine what place sin and evil have within nonhuman animals include Jürgen Moltmann (*The Way of Jesus Christ*, 283-84), David Clough (*On Animals*, 104-153), and Celia Deane-Drummond (*Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom*. London, SCM Press, 2009, 162, 166-167).

<sup>271</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15; see also Jones, ‘Barth and Anselm’, 264.

description of sin suggests that it is rather like a bunch of blots (sins of rational creatures) on an otherwise fine painting. A fallen nonhuman animal creation seems to have little possibility of fitting into such a theology.

There is, however, a way in which to account for a fallen creation within Anselm's though if the focus is extended beyond his theology of sin to include his understanding of truth. Recall that for Anselm 'Every action that does what it ought is fittingly said to do the truth,'<sup>272</sup> and that 'Whatever is what it ought to be, exists rightly'.<sup>273</sup> Such an understanding of truth allows for an expansion beyond sin to include the need to address evil in the world, where things, rational and nonrational, are failing to live as God intended them to. Thus when a creature does not exist in a state of peace with all of God's other creatures, they can be understood as failing to live as they were intended to. God's beautiful intention for creation to be at peace, as seen in such biblical chapters as Genesis 1 and Isaiah 11, when disrupted by sin, can be seen to be a failing to be living in the truth which God intends for creation and so, to be existing in a state that is contrary to God's intentions. This evil would be of a different quality than sin (lacking a rational will which chooses to sin), yet by Anselm's more basic understanding of truth and rectitude, the presence of such 'futility' would need addressing for God's creation to return to truth. Such a use of truth is clearly beyond that which Anselm himself displayed in his writings. Anselm does not at any point seem to suggest that the nonhuman animal creation is capable of existing contrary to the will of God, and he simply does not examine the more specific topics raised here (such as how to account for a fallen creation beyond the rational realm). Despite this, Anselm's broader theological project is robust enough to accommodate the distinctions which other theologians have made between moral evil and natural evil, and which is necessary to address the biblical picture of a fallen state of creation as a whole.

### *Section Summary*

This second section began by outlining and describing Anselm's understanding of sin. Sin was shown to be related to the rational will, and in rejecting the will of God, such a will was seen to be dishonouring God and disrupting the beauty of God's creation. Due to the way in which Anselm describes sin as requiring a rational free will, he suggests that it is only the human and the angelic creatures which are capable of sinning. Human sin is a more

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<sup>272</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 5.

<sup>273</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 7.

significant feature of Anselm's theology and he understands there to be both an original sin and a personal sin, both of which are offenses against the honour of God and both of which require a rational will. In addition to detailing Anselm's theology of sin, this section also called into question Anselm's limitation of sin and fallenness as necessarily based upon a rational will. Given the reality of a biblical understanding of a fallen creation, where it is not just humanity but all earthly creatures which have fallen short of God's intended purposes for them, Anselm's particular theology of sin either needs to be dropped or amended. Anselm himself provides the means of amending his theology through his understanding of truth. Though Anselm himself did not use it in this way, truth as 'doing what one ought' enables understanding any creature which is failing to live out its intended direction in life as failing to live in truth, and thus to be fallen. Such a distinction allows for a more detailed understanding of sin which other theologians have used in differentiating between different types of evil, and allows for Anselm's theology to account for a fallen creation which also stands in need of restoration for God's creative project to have its beauty and fittingness restored.

### **Section 3: Redemption**

#### *Introduction*

In this final section I will begin by examining Anselm's understanding of why God acted in a salvific way towards creation, and why it took the form it did in the incarnation so that I can then show that just as Anselm's theology of sin requires a modification to accommodate a fallen creation, so too does his soteriology. To achieve this, this section will begin by examining why God acts in a redemptive manner at all, and show that such rationale has a great deal to do with both restoring the aesthetic perfection God had intended, as well as the fittingness for God to redeem a fallen creation rather than merely punish it. Next, an examination of the incarnation itself beginning with why God became incarnate as a human, and the justification Anselm gives for such a choice on the part of God, both of which are based on ideas of beauty or fittingness. Following this, a look at what happened in the incarnation, including how God took on human nature yet remained sinless and the infinite value which Christ gained in giving his life. Finally this section will examine what did not occur in the incarnation in the mind of Anselm, including God not taking on any other nature than human and so not redeeming any nature other than the human. I will argue that the infinite value of Christ's life needs to be transferable to the whole of creation, and that God

acts for the benefit and order of the cosmos in the incarnation and not merely for humanity. Despite the need of Anselm's theology to account for the redemption of all creation via the incarnation, however, his theology ultimately fails to account for precisely how this would occur. Though Christ's infinite value exists, there is no way in which Anselm's theology allows for a transfer to the nonhuman, as it does for the human. In addition, if it is accepted that God's incarnation occurred to address the problem of the whole of creation not living in truth and in the beautiful and fitting way God intends for it, then the question as to why God became human, rather than any other creature, has not been fully resolved. If the whole of creation is fallen, and God acted to restore the fallen creation, then though sin is a major rationale for God's incarnation, it is not a sufficient reason for God's incarnation as a human in particular.

### *Fittingness of God's Salvation*

For Anselm, God's rationale for acting in a salvific way towards creation is once again based upon ideas of aesthetics, most significantly fittingness. This idea comes forward significantly within *Cur Deus Homo*. In each of the various ways which Anselm uses to express the fittingness of God's action into the fallen creation, the central idea is that it is unfitting for God to fail to bring about his plans.<sup>274</sup> Anselm describes this idea in a number of related ways. Most broadly, Anselm writes with regards to the 'ugliness' that would impact the universe as a whole if sin were not addressed one way or another.<sup>275</sup> Here the aesthetic bases for God's actions are made abundantly clear; if God fails to restore the right order and beauty of creation, God would appear to fail in governing, which is impossible (as well as unfitting). In addition, in 2.5 Anselm states that 'It is not fitting for God to fail to bring to completion a good beginning.'<sup>276</sup> Thus God acts to ensure His plans for creation are not thwarted. Yet Anselm also describes God's rationale in a more specific manner, and suggests that rational nature (both human and angelic) provides two closely related rationales for God's actions. On the one hand, as noted above, Anselm suggests that the number of happy rational beings has been pre-determined by God and since a significant number of them have fallen (fallen angels and all humans), this would mean that God's pre-chosen number stands in danger of not coming about.<sup>277</sup> Since it is unfitting that this should be the case, God acts to achieve His original will. On the other hand, Anselm states that given the value of rational

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<sup>274</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.4, 1.15, 1.16, 2.4, 2.5.

<sup>275</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.15.

<sup>276</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.5.

<sup>277</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.16.

nature, ‘it is totally foreign to [God] to allow any rational type of creature to perish utterly.’<sup>278</sup> Here, given the fallenness of all humans, God is also motivated not merely by numbers, but by the types of creatures, and seeks to ensure that both humans and angels will have a place in the eschatological future. In an even more specific way, Anselm describes God’s rationale for acting toward creation due to sin based on humanity: ‘It was not fitting that what God had planned for mankind should be utterly nullified.’<sup>279</sup> As with creation as a whole and rational natures, God is motivated to address sin such that His plans for creation, as expressed in the various ranges of created beings, are not overcome and God’s will is ultimately achieved. The fact that God will do *something* does not specify *what* God will do, and Anselm suggests there are a number of options available, although ultimately only one achieves God’s intentions.

One option for God with regards to sin is simply to forgive the sins which have been committed against Him, yet Anselm rejects this outright due to its unfitness. The possibility of God simply forgiving sins is ultimately rejected by Anselm on three counts.<sup>280</sup> First, if God were merely to forgive without punishing, the cosmic disorder would still remain disordered since God’s honour has not been restored.<sup>281</sup> Holmes explains that ‘Such forgiveness would do nothing to correct the disturbance of the order and beauty of the universe caused by sin. By condoning disorder it would lead to an ever-widening area of anarchy in God’s kingdom and destroy the beauty of the universe.’<sup>282</sup> The second reason God cannot simply forgive is that it would mean treating those who do good and evil equally: ‘There is another thing which also follows, if a sin is forgiven without punishment: that the position of the sinner and non-sinner before God will be similar – and this does not befit God.’<sup>283</sup> Such an effect of forgiveness would lead to a result which would be unfitting to God, and thus its rejection. Finally, given that God rewards those who do good in proportion to their following His laws, if sin is neither punished or paid for, it means that sin is more free than righteousness, a result Anselm refers to as ‘extremely unfitting.’<sup>284</sup> Indeed, such a state extends even further for it ‘makes sinfulness resemble God; for just as God is subject to no law, the same is the case with sinfulness.’<sup>285</sup> For these three reasons, based upon the

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<sup>278</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.4.

<sup>279</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.4.

<sup>280</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.12; Holmes, ‘The Upholding of Beauty’, 196.

<sup>281</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.12; Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 212; Holmes, ‘The Upholding of Beauty’, 196.

<sup>282</sup> Holmes, ‘The Upholding of Beauty’, 196.

<sup>283</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.12.

<sup>284</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.12.

<sup>285</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.12.



unfittingness of such results, it means that forgiveness on its own is an unsuitable response on the part of God to the sinful creation. Thus a different action on the part of God was necessary.

Another way open to God to respond to sin is through punishment, though ultimately Anselm rejects this as well due once more to aesthetic reasons. At first glance, however, this would seem an entirely suitable way for God to act. Due to the debt which humans have put themselves into, their thorough inability to make up for it, and God's unwillingness to simply forgive, punishment seems unavoidable. Through punishment, God can regain lost honour by bringing the sinner into submission to His will.<sup>286</sup> Punishment, however, can bring about not only a restoration of God's honour, but also provide order to a fallen creation. Anselm explains that 'God rightly punishes sinners, not for nothing, but for something: for ... he demands the honour due to him from unwilling sinners which they did not wish to render freely, and he places them apart from the just in due order so that nothing should be out of place in his kingdom.'<sup>287</sup> Thus in punishing, God both regains the honour due Him from sinners, and enables order within creation. It is also important in light of the interest with nonhuman animals that this thesis has, to note that Anselm explicitly denies that God punishes the irrational creation. It is only the will which is punished,<sup>288</sup> and God 'does not punish those creatures in which there is no obligation for justice, for the absence of justice is nothing, because there is nothing that he requires from them, nor does the order of the universe require it.'<sup>289</sup> Punishment is not an appropriate response on the part of God towards the irrational creation when it fails to live in truth. This idea connects to the main reason why, despite punishment enabling God's honour to be restored and order to be regained, punishment is not a sufficient response on the part of God to sin in the world. The main reason, which has been highlighted above, is that if God were to simply punish all sinful creatures and not redeem any, then God's plans for creation would remain unfulfilled.<sup>290</sup> Travis Ables writes that 'God's honor is maintained in punishing sinners, but God's basic purpose in creation is not ... Because for God to fail to fulfill God's own created purpose would be the ultimate disruption of the *ordo* of the universe God must act to redeem

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<sup>286</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.14.

<sup>287</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 6.

<sup>288</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 4.

<sup>289</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 6.

<sup>290</sup> Ables, 'St Anselm', 148.

humanity in order to accomplish God's own purposes.<sup>291</sup> Therefore neither forgiveness nor punishment on their own, are sufficient responses on the part of God towards sinful creation.

The incarnation was the great act of God whereby He acted within the world to work against sin, and ultimately overcame it. Yet before turning to what actually occurred within the incarnation, it is perhaps useful to highlight just how the incarnation and the resulting crucifixion, alike to all of God's actions, are actions which are fitting for God, and at times, even necessary in a sense.<sup>292</sup> Such necessity is clearly seen in the way Anselm has laid out his argument in *Cur Deus Homo*. As Ables notes, 'The problematic of *Cur Deus Homo* revolves around how it is indeed "fitting" for God to humble Godself in the birth and death of the Son such that God's honor is not denigrated, and the order of creation is upheld.'<sup>293</sup> Anselm summarises this argument in 2.6:

If, therefore, as is agreed, it is necessary that the heavenly city should have its full complement made up by members of the human race, and this cannot be the case if the recompense of that which we have spoken is not paid, which no one can pay except God, and no one ought to pay except man: it is necessary that a God-Man should pay it.<sup>294</sup>

Since God's will must come about, and only God can make amends but only humans ought to pay, the incarnation of God as a human was the necessary action required. Within this logic Anselm also holds that the creature which makes amends must not only be a human, but must be a human related to all other humans – there must be a connection between the redeemer and those to be redeemed.<sup>295</sup> This same aesthetic rationale which also played a significant role in God's creative acts, will be shown to suggest a scope of redemption which extends beyond the human. To more fully understand why Anselm's soteriology should be expanded first requires knowing how he understands salvation to be operative within the incarnation,

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<sup>291</sup> Ables, 'St Anselm', 148.

<sup>292</sup> Such necessity is not a necessity imposed upon God, forcing God to do something, but rather a necessity based upon the way in which God has made and ordered the universe. Given that God has made such a universe which operates under certain conditions, then certain methods are necessary and these are the methods which God wills to do. See Leftow, 'Anselm on the Necessity of the Incarnation', 167-85.

<sup>293</sup> Ables, 'St Anselm', 148.

<sup>294</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.6.

<sup>295</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.8. Anselm also notes the fittingness of God's choice of becoming human, for of the four ways of creating a human, God had already done three, so leaving it fitting to use the fourth (*CDH*, 2.8). As well, Anselm suggests it is fitting that just as sin had its origin from a woman (Eve), so too does redemption (Mary) (*CDH*, 2.8; *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 18). Finally, Anselm also discusses the fittingness of which member of the Trinity becomes incarnate, and suggests the Son is the most fitting choice (*CDH*, 2.9).

and more specifically, what actually happened in the incarnation and the redemption it enabled.

### *Requirements of What was Taken On*

Of the wide range of elements connected to the act by which God became incarnate, three are most central to Anselm's theological narrative in explaining the incarnation. The first is that in the incarnation, God fully took on human nature and so was both fully God and fully human. Anselm expresses this within *Cur Deus Homo* 1.8: 'Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man, one person in two natures and two natures in one person.' Being dual-natured is essential to Anselm's theology; recall the logic of Anselm discussed earlier, that to redeem requires one who is both God (who can repay) and human (who should repay). Anselm goes into some detail as to the various options which were hypothetically open to God in becoming incarnate with regards to human and divine natures, ultimately rejecting all but one.<sup>296</sup> First Anselm rejects the idea that divine and human natures are simply interchangeable, because 'The result would be someone who would either be God and not man, or man and not God.'<sup>297</sup> Second he rejects the idea that the two can be combined into a new third nature because 'if they were so mixed that a third nature was produced as the consequence of inter-contamination of the two natures, the result would be neither man nor God.'<sup>298</sup> Third, Anselm discards the idea that the divine and human nature can be loosely joined, because if they were they would be unable to fully do what was required.<sup>299</sup> Given such a list of unsuitable options, Anselm states that 'In order, therefore, that a God-Man should bring about what is necessary, it is essential that the same one person who will make the recompense should be perfect God and perfect man. For he cannot do this if he is not true God, and he has no obligation to do so if he is not a true man.'<sup>300</sup> In addition, Anselm notes within 2.7, as he did in 1.8, that these two perfect natures must be located in one person, such that one individual is both true God and true human. For all this discussion as to human and divine nature, however, Anselm goes even further in his specificity with regards to the human side of the equation. For example within 2.8 Anselm states that it is 'necessary that the person paying recompense should be identical with the sinner, or a member of the same race.' Such a

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<sup>296</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.7.

<sup>297</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.7.

<sup>298</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.7.

<sup>299</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.7.

<sup>300</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.7. Anselm also discusses God taking on full human nature in his *9<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 38. In *St. Anselm's Book of Meditations and Prayers*, translated by M.R., 101-32. London: Burns and Gates, 1872.

claim is also found in 2.21, where Anselm states that it is ‘Not right that man should be restored by another man who was not of the same race, even if he were of the same nature.’ Because it was of the race of Adam that sin entered the world, so too reasons Anselm, must recompense be made by a member of that same group. Another fully human creature that was not related to Adam and Eve would lack a necessary link to those in need of redemption and so be unable to fittingly render payment.<sup>301</sup> Thus when God became incarnate, God did so in a way that was fitting to the situation, choosing against those ways which may not have been as appropriate, and ultimately choosing to become a human being of the race of Adam such that all humanity could fittingly be redeemed.

In addition to being fully God and fully human, Anselm also stresses the importance of the one who is to redeem to be sinless. Such a requirement of sinlessness is based upon the way in which Anselm’s logic has portrayed the requirements of the redeemer. In order for a being to not only not incur their own debt, but to gain enough honour with which to pay off the debt of the whole of humanity, there are some necessary requirements. It means that such a being could not be a sinful one, for if they were they would have their own debt and would not be in a position to benefit others, or even themselves. In addition, by the same token it requires that the redeemer be one who is both God and human, and in that human ‘it will be impossible for sin to exist because he is to be God.’<sup>302</sup> Given that the Christ is without sin, means that they are under no obligation to die.<sup>303</sup> Yet existence without sin is not a sufficient means of helping others – it is necessary yet not sufficient, for all creatures owe a perfect obedience to God and so such a life does not gain extra merit.<sup>304</sup> Yet if the redeemer were to willingly give their life for the honour of God, this is not something which is required of them: ‘Let us see whether perhaps this may not be for him to give his life, or to lay aside his soul, or to hand himself over to death, for the honour of God. For this is not something which God will demand from him in repayment of a debt, given that, since there will be no sin in him, he will be under no obligation to die, as we have said.’<sup>305</sup> Now given that the Christ is to be understood as without sin, Anselm also inquires as to whether the Christ is even capable of sinning. Simply put, Anselm states that the Christ both is and is not capable of sinning.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Brown, ‘Anselm on the Atonement’, 287.

<sup>302</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.10. Anselm is likewise very clear that not only is the hypothetical saviour free of sin, but that such an individual was found in Jesus Christ. See Anselm, *9<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 40, § 45, § 46; *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>303</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>304</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>305</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.11.

<sup>306</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.10.

Since sin is an act of the will, and the Christ has the capacity to choose between various options – otherwise this person would not be capable of righteousness – it certainly is possible that the Christ could will to sin. Yet, and this is quite significant, because sin is an act of the will, and God never wills to sin, the Christ can also be understood to be incapable of sinning. Thus the redeemer who becomes incarnate is not only both fully human and divine, but is also fully without sin. These two elements, when added to the idea of a freely offered life to God which need not be lost due to sin, results in an excess of honour which can be used to pay off the debt incurred and restore order and beauty to the cosmos.

The extent of the honour which Christ's freely-given life entails is crucial to Anselm's soteriology, for it is by this honour that Christ redeems. Yet to better understand Anselm's logic requires a quick remembrance of the weight of sin. Since for Anselm, 'man ought not to commit sin even though the inevitable consequence were that all which is not God should perish,'<sup>307</sup> it shows the huge debt that has been occurred with every sin. Each sin outweighs the whole of the created cosmos, and as a result, 'immutable truth and right reason of course require that he who sins should offer to God, by way of restitution for the honour taken from Him, something of greater worth than is that for which he ought not to have dishonoured Him [than all that is outside God].'<sup>308</sup> Humans lack even the capacity to live as they should, let alone to offer more to God. Given such a state, God intervened to pay human debt.<sup>309</sup> The means by which the Son of God was able to pay for the debt which humanity had built up, was by freely offering up his life for the sake of justice. The exceptional value of this act is based upon the exceptional value of the life of Christ. Anselm goes into explicit detail about this within both *Cur Deus Homo* 2.14, as well as in *Meditation on Human Redemption*. Within 2.14 Anselm explains that since Christ is both human as well as God, sins against him are as sins against God, and therefore it would be better for the universe to be destroyed than for a single sin to be committed against Christ. Then Anselm states that 'If every good is as good as its destruction is bad, he is an incomparably greater good than the sins immeasurably outweighed by his killing are bad.'<sup>310</sup> As a result, his life is 'so great a good and so loveable [that it] can suffice to pay the debt which is owed for the sins of the whole world,'<sup>311</sup> and it is

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<sup>307</sup> Anselm, *11<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 51.

<sup>308</sup> Anselm, *11<sup>th</sup> Meditation*, § 51.

<sup>309</sup> Anselm, *A Meditation on Human Redemption*, 422.

<sup>310</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.14.

<sup>311</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.14.

also ‘capable of paying infinitely more.’<sup>312</sup> Thus through offering his life, which was worth more than all the sins of the whole world, Christ made redemption possible.

### *Limitations of the Incarnation and its Redemption*

Thus far this section has primarily examined two main concepts. First the reason for God’s act of salvation and the form it took in the incarnation was examined and it was shown that like all of God’s acts, such redemption is based upon, and occurs in line with aesthetic concepts in mind. God’s act of salvation, and the incarnation of the Son of God as a human, followed along lines which bespeak of God’s desire to act in a fitting manner such that order and beauty is preserved and restored. Second, requirements for the divine act to render satisfaction for the sins of humanity (Christ’s sinlessness and his taking on full humanity) were examined. This discussion has principally been focused on what God achieved, with little attention to what God did not achieve, by Anselm’s account, in the incarnation. Anselm is often quite explicit about what the incarnation did not achieve, and gives reasons for why this is so. Despite Anselm having reasons for limiting the efficacy of God’s soteriology brought about through the incarnation, such reasons seem to exist in some degree of tension with Anselm’s overall aesthetic theology where fittingness and beauty hold significant sway. Below, the way in which Anselm understands God’s salvation to be limited will be critically examined, and the need for Christ’s redemption to be effective for the nonhuman creation will be shown to be in line with Anselm’s aesthetic cosmology. Answering how such redemption can be made effective, however, is not possible through the writings of Anselm.

Anselm explicitly denies that the redemption brought about by the incarnation has any capacity of offering salvation to creatures other than humans. For Anselm, this means denying that angels (the only other creature he understood to be capable of sin) can benefit from the salvation which the incarnation offers. The same logic used by Anselm to deny angels redemption would work just as effectively on nonhuman animals. The case Anselm wishes to make is found within a chapter of *Cur Deus Homo*.<sup>313</sup> In it, Anselm describes how, since human redemption required an act by one

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<sup>312</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.14. Within *A Meditation on Human Redemption* (422) Anselm also describes how the life of Christ is worth more than the sins of creation, stating that ‘the life of that man [Jesus] is more precious than everything that is not God, and it surpasses every debt owed by sinners as satisfaction.’

<sup>313</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.21.

who was both human and divine, condemned angels could only be saved by an angel-God.<sup>314</sup> Not only must the redeemer be of the same nature, but they must also be of the same race;<sup>315</sup> just as humans could not be redeemed by one with their nature who was not of the same race, the same would be true for angels. But angels, unlike humans, are not all of one race, and so even if God became an angel, it simply would not work.<sup>316</sup> What Anselm cannot conceive of is a means by which the redemptive effects of the incarnation of God as a human could extend out to a creature that is not human.

The way in which Anselm has constructed his theology does not require, however, that angels have a chance for redemption. Given that he understands humans as the other rational creature to be capable of standing in their place and making up their lost numbers,<sup>317</sup> the necessary rational number of creatures is maintained and God's ordered creation is kept safe.<sup>318</sup> Since angels are rational creatures which freely willed to reject God, and God's honour can be restored through either redemption or punishment,<sup>319</sup> redemption of angels would not seem to be a requirement of Anselm's theology. God is free to simply reward the good angels, punish the bad for their respective choices, and make up lost numbers through humans. The same is not true of nonhuman animals.

Recall from above that while Anselm did not view nonhuman animals as capable of sin, a theology of the biblical Fall requires that even if nonhuman animals are not sinning as angels and humans, nonhuman animals must be understood as fallen, as negatively affected by the sin of humans, and thus in need of redemption. Due to the twisting effects of human sin seen in the Fall of creation, nonhuman animals are not living as God intends for them, and are therefore not living in truth. Such existence warps the beauty and order of God's creation and so needs to be addressed for God's creation to be fully restored to its aesthetic perfection. While for

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<sup>314</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.21.

<sup>315</sup> 'Race' for Anselm does not refer to people of different cultures or skin colours, but rather to the family line. As all humans are understood to be descended from the line of Adam and Eve, they are all of one race. If God were to create a new human outside of this procession, this would be a different 'race' of humans.

<sup>316</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 2.21.

<sup>317</sup> It seems a somewhat unfortunate deal for angels, for though humans are similar enough (as rational creatures) to make up the lost numbers of angels, angels are dissimilar enough to not be able to benefit from the redemption brought about by the incarnation of God as a human.

<sup>318</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.16.

<sup>319</sup> Anselm, *CDH*, 1.14, 1.15.

angels God can simply punish, for nonhuman animals by Anselm's account, this would not be effective. The reason why punishment is simply not effective is that for Anselm, punishment is only of use towards a rational will: 'A punishment is only effective because it is against the will, and only beings with a will feel punishment.'<sup>320</sup> Anselm goes into more detail a couple of chapters later when he states that God 'does not punish those creatures in which there is no obligation for justice.'<sup>321</sup> Bear in mind that justice for Anselm is 'not rectitude of knowledge or action, but of will.'<sup>322</sup> Thus nonhuman animals, insofar as they lack rationality equal to humans and angels, cannot will to do an act for the sake of rectitude, and so likewise cannot be punished for failing to do so. If nonhuman animals are fallen, and currently failing to live in truth, yet they cannot be punished to restore the order and beauty which their fallen state creates, Anselm's theology would seem to require their redemption. While Anselm did not conceive of how the redemption brought about by the incarnation might be transferred to nonhuman animals, as was noted above, he is clear that the life of Christ is more than sufficient to account for the sins of humanity and all the subsequent effects found in the Fall.

## Conclusion

This chapter presented key aspects of Anselm's answer to the question as to why God became human in order to argue five points. First, that God's rationale for becoming human extends beyond the human. Second and third, that Anselm's accounts of both sin and redemption need to be adjusted following the logic of his aesthetic cosmology given the reality of a cosmic Fall. Fourth, that while Anselm's theology is capable of extending his understanding of sin to include a fallen creation via his theology of truth, it is not possible to account for the same extension of redemption via the incarnation. And fifth, that while sin and human fallenness is a significant rationale for God's incarnation, human sin in itself, is not a sufficient answer to why God became human in particular given the cosmic reality of the Fall. These five key points were argued across three sections. The first section showed how God has willed for the cosmos to be structured in such a way that it is beautiful and

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<sup>320</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 4.

<sup>321</sup> Anselm, *On the Virgin Conception*, ch. 6.

<sup>322</sup> Anselm, *On Truth*, ch. 12.



orderly, where everything which matches its intended purpose is fitting and existing in truth. This section was essential for understanding how Anselm's theology interacts with the topics of sin and redemption, and how the logic of this aesthetic cosmology has significant implications once the biblical account of a cosmic Fall is brought in. The second section examined Anselm's theology of sin and the creatures it affects. It was argued that once the topic of the fallenness of all creation is brought in, based upon Anselm's aesthetic cosmology, his theology of sin needs to be adjusted. Such an adjustment was suggested as possible through Anselm's understanding of truth. Whereas his understanding of sin and fallenness was limited to rational creatures, his theology of truth as 'existing as one ought' is capable of accounting for how nonhuman creatures might be understood as fallen when they fail to exist as God intends for them to. In the third section, Anselm's aesthetic cosmology was used once again to show how, in light of a cosmic fallenness, God's redemptive act in the incarnation should be extended to include the nonhuman animal creation. Unlike angels, nonhuman animals by Anselm's account cannot be punished and so, his logic requires, they must be redeemed for the beauty of creation to be restored.

The ideas found within the theology of Anselm provide for a very fertile ground in which to search for an answer to the question as to why God became human in the incarnation. Working through Anselm's theology has shown the significance of the place of sin within a full account of the incarnation. Yet though it is significant, it is not sufficient. If God became incarnate to address the fallenness of creation which has tarnished the beauty of creation, and all creatures are fallen, then this answer fails to address the question as to why it was the human creature in particular God chose to become incarnate as. In addition, through critical engagement with Anselm it has also been shown how nonhuman animals might find a place within the salvific workings of God. Yet there are also some things which Anselm's account fails to fully answer. First, though Anselm's theology shows the necessity of God's redemption extending to the nonhuman, it does not suggest a way in which this is possible. Indeed, Anselm felt that there was no way for God's taking on humanity to extend to the rest of creation as is demonstrated in his belief that fallen angels are unable to benefit from the redemption the life and death of Christ made possible. This is a topic which will be more fully addressed in chapter three of this thesis. The second feature which Anselm's theology fails to cover in sufficient detail is the place of the image of God.

Though Anselm felt that this was of vital importance (and honour) for humans, what it entails was not something Anselm discussed in any great detail. Given the significance of the image of God for understanding the human in the Christian tradition, and therefore the creature who God chose to become incarnate as, it is one which must be examined to more fully answer why God became human in the incarnation. This is the topic addressed in the next chapter, in dialogue with Gregory of Nyssa.

## Gregory of Nyssa and the Image of God

### Introduction

In the first chapter I made a case for the first of my theses: that God's rationale for the incarnation extends beyond the human. In this chapter I will give more support to this idea, and will also begin to suggest a basis by which we might understand there to be ethical implications for the human relation to the nonhuman animal creation based upon human nature, thus building support for my third thesis. Gregory of Nyssa is a useful conversation partner with which to follow Anselm due to the similar ways they understand the rationale for the incarnation – similar yet not the same. Gregory offers is a means of filling in the gap which was discovered in Anselm's theology regarding how God's incarnation as a human might enable redemption to extend beyond the human.

Gregory of Nyssa has a multifaceted response to why God became human in Jesus Christ. A major portion of this response is that humans are made in the image of God – a term which summarizes all the things which characterize resemblance to God. By their very nature, humans are made in the *imago Dei*. Humans, however, are not simply images of God, but are also creatures which share many things with the rest of creation, for humans are created with a dual nature. Gregory's understanding of human nature, and the human creation as made in the image of God, presents an interesting opportunity for interaction between a theology of the incarnation, and the potential inclusion of nonhuman animals within the effects of the incarnation via the human. To be sure, much of what Gregory understands the image of God and human nature to be comprised of is often described in opposition or contrast to the rest of the earthly order, and any understanding of what constitutes both the image and human nature must address these aspects. In addition, alike to Anselm, Gregory shares the view that among earthly creatures, it is only humans that stand in need of redemption, because only they are fallen. For Gregory it would seem that the incarnation is focused purely upon the human. Yet despite denying that nonhuman animals need redeeming through the incarnation, Gregory does (unlike Anselm) have the beginnings of a theology which can explain how such an event could occur. Though, like Anselm, he often defines the image and human nature in contrast to irrational creation, unlike Anselm, Gregory also describes both the image of God and the rest of human nature in ways which connect humanity to the other parts of creation. In so doing, he implicitly enables an understanding of the incarnation as an event which impacts both humanity and the nonhuman animal creation

via the human constitution as a microcosm. Gregory's theology suggests the possibility that part of human nature entails an inclusion of the rest of the created order through the human role as a microcosmic representative, and so in taking on human nature in the incarnation, God was involving the rest of the created order.

This chapter proceeds in three sections. In the first I will briefly examine Gregory's broader understanding as to why God became incarnate. Here, in line with Anselm, Gregory understands the incarnation primarily based around the idea of God addressing the problem of sin among humanity. The human creature has particular importance within Gregory's theology, and how and why this is so will be examined to show why God became incarnate. The next section follows from the first: whereas God became incarnate to deal with human sin, He became human in particular due to the unique human constitution as images of God, such that they could be restored to this nature and calling. This constitution is unique among creatures, and humans were made in such a way that they might partake of the divine. To ensure that this goal of God's was not undone through sin, God became a human. For Gregory, however, humans are not simply images of God; they are also earthly, fleshly creatures with a connection to the rest of creation. This idea is briefly touched upon in the second section, but comes more fully to the fore in the third which looks at the ways in which humans are linked with the nonhuman creation. It is the whole of this nature, both the heavenly image of God and earthly flesh, which Christ takes up in the incarnation, and through this, there is room for understanding a relationship between human and nonhuman. Ultimately it will be argued that in addressing the problem of human sin, and restoring the human nature as images of God, as well as their irrational nature, God achieved not just the redemption of humanity, but also enabled them to fulfill their role in drawing creation up to God. This human calling, predicated on the redemption the incarnation enables and the human constitution as microcosmic images of God, is descriptive of a particular understanding of human and nonhuman relations. Humans share a connection with the rest of creation both via their soul (comprised of vegetative, sensible, and rational components) as well as also through their dual nature as rational and irrational. Such a constitution enables their calling towards drawing the irrational creation up to God, and thus is expressive that there are implications for humans regarding their relationship to the nonhuman realm.

## Section 1: Why God became Incarnate

### *Incarnation*

In the incarnation of Christ, Gregory holds that God acted to redeem a sinful creation from the plight it brought onto itself. The two main writings of Gregory that discuss the incarnation are *Against Apollinarius* and *The Great Catechism*. In *Against Apollinarius* Gregory defends against the claims of Apollinarius in his writing *Demonstration of the Divine Incarnation in Human Likeness*.<sup>323</sup> Gregory responds to a variety of issues raised by Apollinarius and included in these arguments are his view that God retains his *apatheia*, that the body of Christ is not eternal, and his rejection of Apollinarius's view that Christ had only a divine mind.<sup>324</sup> In turning to *The Great Catechism* one finds an instructional work that is primarily written on the topic of the incarnation, which takes up chapters 5-32. Within these chapters three main broad ideas are found: an explanation as to how a good God could have made humans which are sinful and suffer,<sup>325</sup> a defense of the philosophical reasonableness of the incarnation,<sup>326</sup> and finally a recognition and defense of the idea that while one can know *that* the incarnation occurred, one cannot know precisely *how* it came about.<sup>327</sup> Within these two writings more broadly Gregory seeks to address the questions of why the incarnation took place, and what happened in the incarnation.

Gregory suggests a variety of reasons why God acted in and through the incarnation. Though it almost goes without saying, Gregory's presentation of the incarnation is ultimately connected to his understanding of the soteriological actions of God in Christ.<sup>328</sup> In this, he shares a similar emphasis on the centrality of addressing sin as Anselm, though not nearly as detailed. Gregory describes the salvific work of God in the incarnation in a variety of ways:

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<sup>323</sup> Brian Daley, 'Divine Transcendence and Human Transformation: Gregory of Nyssa's Anti-Apollinarian Christology,' *Modern Theology*, 18:4 (2002) 498.

<sup>324</sup> Daley, 'Divine Transcendence', 500.

<sup>325</sup> Bouteneff, Peter. *Beginnings: Ancient Christian Readings of the Biblical Creation Narratives*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008, 158; Gregory of Nyssa, *The Great Catechism*. ch. 5-6. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore, 471-509. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979.

<sup>326</sup> Meredith, Anthony. *Gregory of Nyssa*. New York: Routledge, 1999, 73; Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5-32.

<sup>327</sup> Ludlow, Morwenna. *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)modern*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, 105; Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 11.

<sup>328</sup> Ludlow, Gregory, 97; Smith, *Paradise and Passion: Human and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2004, 46; <sup>328</sup> Daley, 'Divine Transcendence', 499-50; Daley, Brian. "Heavenly Man" and "Eternal Christ": Apollinarius and Gregory of Nyssa on the Personal Identity of the Savior.' *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10.4 (2002), 480.

‘to save lost man’,<sup>329</sup> ‘to set him upright’,<sup>330</sup> ‘in order that our nature might by this transfusion of the Divine become itself divine’,<sup>331</sup> ‘to destroy sin’,<sup>332</sup> and to restore creation.<sup>333</sup> Yet Gregory’s understanding of the redemptive effects of the incarnation is slightly more nuanced than these brief examples might indicate. God’s redemptive work is not just about destroying sin, about getting rid of something, but is also focused on restoration to a prior state of existence; it is a redemption of restoration. Gregory describes this idea in a number of ways. He suggests that sin is a disease which needs healing,<sup>334</sup> or that it is something which needs purging.<sup>335</sup> Human nature itself has become diseased and God’s redemptive work in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ is to get rid of the disease such that human nature can be restored to what it was before: ‘the resurrection promises us nothing else than the restoration of the fallen to their ancient state.’<sup>336</sup> Thus the way God worked salvation through his incarnation was to remove the harmful effects of sin which had worked its way into the human creature. Although it is clear that God’s incarnation was soteriological in purpose, the important question of why God willed to become human in particular still needs to be addressed.

The human creature is for Gregory easily the most valuable and significant of all God’s creations. It is the human which is ‘adorned with the highest excellences,’<sup>337</sup> they are creatures which are ‘created morally noble and for the noblest destiny.’<sup>338</sup> He refers to the human as ‘that great and precious thing,’<sup>339</sup> and writes that ‘for this reason man was made last after the animals, as nature advanced in an orderly course to perfection.’<sup>340</sup> Yet it is not for any of these reasons that God chose human nature in which to become incarnate. Despite

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<sup>329</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 24. See also Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Apollinarius*, J152. Translated by Richard McCambly. Accessed June 27, 2012. Online: <https://www.sage.edu/faculty/salomd/nyssa/appolin.html>.

<sup>330</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 15.

<sup>331</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 25. See also Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J151; Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*. Edited and translated by Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, 2.30. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1978.

<sup>332</sup> Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J171.

<sup>333</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 26. In note #2 to this section, Schaff and Wace note that for many of the great thinkers of the early church, Gregory included, the incarnation was viewed as having cosmic significance.

<sup>334</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 15, 26; *Against Eunomius*. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by H. A. Wilson. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979, Book 6, §3; *On Infants’ Early Deaths*, 376. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore, 372-81. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979.

<sup>335</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 26.

<sup>336</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, 17.2. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by Henry Austin Wilson, 387-427. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979. See also *Catechism*, ch. 26.

<sup>337</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 8.

<sup>338</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 8.

<sup>339</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.1.

<sup>340</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.5.

such valued descriptions of humans and the range of capacities which they possess in light of being made in the image of God (which will be detailed below), these in themselves do not make human nature more worthy of the incarnation than any other. Gregory writes:

For every created being is distant, by an equal degree of inferiority, from that which is the Highest, Who is unapproachable by reason of the sublimity of His Being: the whole universe is in value the same distance beneath Him. For that which is absolutely inaccessible does not allow access to some one thing while it is unapproachable by another, but it transcends all existences by an equal sublimity.<sup>341</sup>

Thus there is no basis in human nature which makes such a nature more worthy for God's incarnation than any other. In the end, Gregory writes that

if all things equally fall short of this dignity, one thing there is that is not beneath the dignity of God, and that is, to do good to him that needed it. If we confess, then, that where the disease was, there the healing power attended, what is there in this belief which is foreign to the proper conception of the Deity?'<sup>342</sup>

Humans have fallen, and so humans need redeeming. Though Gregory does not say so, the logic is that if there were another piece of creation that needed redeeming, the same motivation of God to do good to those that need it would seem to apply. For Gregory, however, alike to Anselm, no other part of earthly creation stands in need of redemption for only humans are sinful.

### *The Fall*

Gregory's focus on the scope and impact of sin is, alike to that of Anselm, restricted primarily to humans. Regarding the angelic realm, Gregory lacks more in his discussions on the impact of sin than Anselm, and does not even consider how or if angels might be redeemed.<sup>343</sup> With regards to the nonhuman earthly realm, Gregory believes that nonhuman animals are not fallen and so not in need of redemption. He writes in *Against Eunomius* Book

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<sup>341</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 27.

<sup>342</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 27.

<sup>343</sup> Indeed, Gregory seems to give little thought to the angelic creation, beyond recognizing that it was the Devil who caused the fall of humans (*On the Baptism of Christ*, 518-19. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore, 518-24. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), and that it is to the Devil that sinful humans have fallen into the control of (from whom Christ ransoms them) (*Catechism*, ch. 23).

6 §3 that God came to heal humans of their sin, ‘applying the healing in that way which He knew to be for the good of that part of the creation which He knew to be in infirmity.’<sup>344</sup> The nonhuman animal creation, which lacks rationality – only humans are the ‘rational animal’<sup>345</sup> – does not have the capacity to do evil. Though they are certainly driven by emotion and passions, something which Gregory certainly does not value, without a mind their passions never move from passion to vice. Gregory explains:

Thus our love of pleasure took its beginning from our being made like to the irrational creation, and was increased by the transgressions of men, becoming the parent of so many varieties of sins arising from pleasure as we cannot find among the irrational animals. Thus the rising of anger in us is indeed akin to the impulse of the brutes; but it grows by the alliance of thought: for thence come malignity, envy, deceit, conspiracy, hypocrisy; all these are the result of the evil husbandry of the mind.<sup>346</sup>

Here Gregory makes it clear that nonhuman animals, without the use of a rational mind, lack the capacity to do vice and sin. The importance of recognising the cosmic extent of the Fall was detailed in the first chapter, and so it will not be repeated here. Suffice to say that if the effects of the Fall are cosmic (as shown in the first chapter), then the nonhuman creation needs some means of redemption if it is to be put right. While the logic of Anselm’s broader theology suggested that such redemption was necessary, his theology lacked the means of expressing how this might have occurred through the incarnation. Gregory, while sharing with Anselm the view that the incarnation is solely for the redemption of humanity, repeatedly (though without the depth that Maximus the Confessor will give it) suggests a way in which one might connect the redemptive works of God in the incarnation with the rest of creation. This idea will be detailed later within the chapter, but for now it is worth exploring how humans are fallen, and what impact sin has made to human nature, for in answering this we gain a better understanding regarding Gregory’s particular answer to why God became human.

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<sup>344</sup> See also Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 27, where Gregory discusses God’s choice in the incarnation to become human and writes that ‘where the disease was, there the healing power attended.’

<sup>345</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, 439. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore, 428-68. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979; *Against Eunomius*, Book 2, §7; Book 7, §1; *Making of Man*, 8.5, 8.8.

<sup>346</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.4.



The human creature, for Gregory, is dual-natured. In the third section I will detail Gregory's 'dual creation' understanding of the creation narrative, but for now it is sufficient to know that Gregory understands humans to be creatures made by God as both rational (or intelligible and immaterial) and irrational (or sensible and material).<sup>347</sup> This is necessary to grasp, for the way in which Gregory understands humans to be fallen affects both of these natures, and it is both of these natures which Christ takes up in the incarnation in order to redeem humanity. For Gregory, the rational nature is the most important. Evidence of this can be found not only within the various examples Gregory gives regarding the irrational being made to serve the rational (e.g. *On the Making of Man*, 8, where Gregory describes in a variety of ways how the physical human body was formed to serve the intellectual soul), but primarily from the idea that God is rational, and humans are made in God's image.<sup>348</sup> Yet the rational part of humans – their capacity to rule over their irrational aspects, and even their very ability to image God – has been negatively affected by sin. Humans are no longer able to image God as He intended, and therefore cannot have their rational nature properly lead their irrational. Gregory writes that

the habit of sinning entered as we have described, and with fatal quickness, into the life of man; and from that small beginning spread into this infinitude of evil. Then that godly beauty of the soul which was an imitation of the Archetypal Beauty, like fine steel blackened with the vicious rust, preserved no longer the glory of its familiar essence, but was disfigured with the ugliness of sin.<sup>349</sup>

Thus through sin, the image of God which humans were made to be is tarnished, and humans are no longer capable of reflecting God's glory.<sup>350</sup> Consequently through allowing sin to impact their rational nature, humans have also negatively affected their irrational nature. For Gregory, the irrational physical body of the human acts as a "mirror of a mirror". Just as the rational human mind receives its beauty from reflecting (imaging) God, so too does the human body receive a reflective glory from the human mind.<sup>351</sup> When the mind's mirror is

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<sup>347</sup> See for instance Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.8, 16.9; *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>348</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.9.

<sup>349</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity*, ch. 12. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore, 343-71. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979. See also *Making of Man*, 18.6.

<sup>350</sup> Maspero ('Image', 413-14) briefly notes the importance of the restoration of humans to the image of God for understanding salvation.

<sup>351</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9.

tarnished however, so too necessarily, is the body. One major way Gregory expresses the fallenness of the rational impacting the irrational is through the use of sexual reproduction which Gregory suggests is directly caused by God's reaction to sin (sex itself is not sinful, but is a merciful response made by God to a fallen humanity who could no longer reproduce 'rationally').<sup>352</sup> What these examples, from both the rational and irrational aspects of humanity illustrate, is the impact which sin has had on the human creature. Such a negative impact is obviously contrary to God's intentions for creation. The incarnation is God's means of attending to this impact in a decisive way.

In the incarnation, God acts to take up those fallen parts of the human creation in order to redeem and restore them to their intended order. It is each of these natures, the rational and the irrational, which Christ took on in the incarnation so that the whole of humanity could be redeemed. Gregory is quite clear on this point, and given the importance of it, it is worth examining his claims in some detail. In a range of his writings, Gregory repeatedly discusses Christ taking on the whole of human nature. From *The Great Catechism* we find Gregory stating simply 'God was born in the nature of man'.<sup>353</sup> Within *Letter XVII*, Gregory writes 'The Illuminator of this darkened world darted the beam of His Divinity through the whole compound of our nature, through soul, I say, and body too, and so appropriated humanity entire by means of His own light, and took it up and made it just that thing which He is Himself.'<sup>354</sup> From *Against Eunomius* we read how God 'becomes Man while still remaining God, being both God and Man in the entirety of the two several natures.'<sup>355</sup> Finally in *Against Apollinarius*, Gregory asserts that Christ 'fully assumed our nature in order to deify humanity by union with his divinity,'<sup>356</sup> and that 'He was like us in all things, in that He took upon Him manhood in its entirety with soul and body, so that our salvation was accomplished by means of both.'<sup>357</sup> Each of these writings, varied as they are, share the common idea that in the incarnation Christ took on the whole of human nature, both the rational and irrational.

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<sup>352</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 17.4.

<sup>353</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 11.

<sup>354</sup> Gregory of Nyssa. 'Letter XVII – To Eustathia, Ambrosia, and Basilissa.' In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series, vol. 5*. Translated by William Moore and Henry Wilson, 542-45. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979, 542. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979.

<sup>355</sup> Gregory, *Against Eunomius*, 2 §12.

<sup>356</sup> Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.151.

<sup>357</sup> Gregory, *Against Eunomius*, Book 2 §1.

## *Section Summary*

Up until now, this description of Gregory's, regarding why God became incarnate seems not too distinct from Anselm's, for both place a large significance upon the role of sin in determining why God became incarnate. Yet Gregory places particular emphasis on the way in which humans are constituted. Gregory understands the human to have both a rational heavenly nature (as they are made in the image of God), as well as an irrational one. Though, as will be shown below, Gregory holds strongly to humans as made of both natures, his understanding of humans as images of God plays a particularly large role in how he conceives of the human creature's ontology and their calling. The image of God is central to Gregory's understanding of who and what humans are. God's choice to become human, though due to sin, is significantly motivated by the particular nuance of restoring humans to what God has willed for them to be – first and foremost being the image of God, and secondly, being the earthly creatures that they are. Of these, the image of God plays a central role, for, as noted above, this aspect of the human is the basis of their higher value within creation. The incarnation, as Gregory understands it, is a means of restoring the image of God within humanity such that humans can become the creatures they were made to be. In the next section I will detail what the image of God means for Gregory, including not only the various capacities it entails, but also the connected callings. In doing so I will show Gregory's understanding of the incarnation, though predicated on addressing sin, is focused on restoring humans to their created goal as images of God, and show that the way Gregory conceives of the image of God opens up a way of understanding how humans (and an incarnate God) are connected to the rest of creation.

## **Section 2: The Image of God**

### *Introduction*

Gregory of Nyssa's descriptions of the image of God are multi-faceted and intriguing in their range. In a phrase from *The Great Catechism*, Gregory sums up his thoughts on what the image of God entails: 'in this likeness implied in the word image, there is a summary of

all things that characterize Deity.<sup>358</sup> Through a variety of his writings, Gregory describes a range of ways in which humans image God, including ‘purity, freedom from passion, blessedness, alienation from all evil,’<sup>359</sup> ‘understanding’,<sup>360</sup> ‘love’,<sup>361</sup> ‘ruling’,<sup>362</sup> ‘free will’<sup>363</sup> and ‘rationality’.<sup>364</sup> In addition to these elements and capacities Gregory also conceives of the image of God as a reflective capacity of humans to image God, alike that of a mirror.<sup>365</sup> Using his analogy of the mirror, Gregory proposes that humans can image God insofar as they reflect Him; to the extent that they do not, they will fail to retain His image.<sup>366</sup> Beyond his discussion as to what makes up the image, Gregory also clarifies that when he speaks of the image of God he is generally not speaking of any individual human being, nor even Adam, but human *nature*, and it is this nature which is created in the image of God.<sup>367</sup> In addition, Gregory makes an obvious distinction between God and that which is made in His image.<sup>368</sup> The following section will first examine the range of aspects by which Gregory

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<sup>358</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5. See also von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Presence and Thought: An Essay on the Religious Philosophy of Gregory of Nyssa*. Translated by Mark Sebanc. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995, 113.

<sup>359</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 5.

<sup>360</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 5.

<sup>361</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 5.

<sup>362</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 4.

<sup>363</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5.

<sup>364</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.9.

<sup>365</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9; Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 434, 449. See also Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 21; Behr, John. ‘The Rational Animal: A Rereading of Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*.’ *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7.2 (1999) 231; Hart, David. ‘The Mirror of the Infinite: Gregory of Nyssa on the *Vestigia Trinitatis*.’ *Modern Theology* 18:4 (2002) 547-52.

<sup>366</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9; von Balthasar (*Presence and Thought*, 115) notes that the soul is not a passive mirror that can only receive an external imprint. It is a free and living mirror.

<sup>367</sup> Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 167; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 21; Zachhuber, Johannes. *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*. Leiden: Brill, 2000, 158. Maspero, Giulio. ‘Image.’ In *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*. Edited by Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero. Translated by Seth Cherney. Leiden: Brill, 2010, 413. To anyone familiar with modern studies into the nature of the image of God, Gregory shares a great deal in common with not just a single interpretation, but with a variety of interpretations: Gregory presents the image of God in line with not only a substantive interpretation (seen in Gregory’s understanding of the image of God in the rational human soul, or the capacity for freedom), but also a functional one (seen in Gregory’s understanding the calling to mirror all the divine elements which make up the image of God). Though Gregory does not discuss the image of God in ways which are alike to the third common way of interpreting the image of God, the relational, he does speak on a number of elements crucial to the relational interpretation such as human sex, though in ways which contrast remarkably from that of the relational interpretation; e.g. whereas the relational interpretation views human sexuality as essential to understanding the image of God, Gregory generally views it as entirely economical with respect to the image (though not for human nature). For the importance of sexual differentiation within a relational interpretation, see Barth, *Church Dogmatics III/1*, edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by J.W. Edwards, O. Bussey, and Harold Knight. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958, 186).

<sup>368</sup> Although Gregory was not as exact in his distinction of humans as the image of God and humans made in the image of God as later theologians would be (for example Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics III/1*, 189), he is clear that God is the Prototype in whose image we are made (*Making of Man*, 16.7). Though Gregory is well aware of other distinctions between humans and God (such as finitude versus infiniteness (*Catechism*, ch. 10), the two related ideas of createdness and mutability are the primary ways in which Gregory discusses the distinction between humans and the God whose image they bear (Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 174; Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 236-237; Gregory, *The Making of Man*, 16.12; *Catechism*, ch. 21). Thus although humans have been

describes the image of God that act to define humanity in contrast to any other created being, as well as those callings which humans have due to their creation in God's image. Such a position is neither new nor surprising, for humans alone are said to be created in the image of God within the Bible.<sup>369</sup> The range of aspects chosen by Gregory in defining the image of God are descriptive of his view in which humans are thought to be unique among earthly creatures. These aspects help one understand Gregory's anthropology and also gain insight into a significant part of what Christ took up in the incarnation. Once these attributes are addressed, I will then turn to those elements of the image of God which enable a means for humans to be representative of other creatures, and through this nature, for Christ to be as well.

Gregory discusses God's motivation for making humanity in the image of God in three separate texts: *The Great Catechism*, *On the Making of Man*, and *On Infants' Early Deaths*. In each of these Gregory presents a couple of quite similar ideas. Within *The Great Catechism* Gregory writes about how God desired a creature to partake and enjoy the wide range of divine goodness, and so had to make a creature which was capable of doing this.<sup>370</sup> Just as various creatures are created in different ways for different facets of life (some for the air, some for water, etc.), so too is the human creature made such that it 'might have [its] desire set upon that which is not strange to [it]'.<sup>371</sup> For this reason, humanity was made in the image of God. Within *On Infants' Early Deaths* Gregory reaffirms this understanding and explains that 'The same necessity requires that in our partaking of God there should be some kinship in the constitution of the partaker with that which is partaken of. Therefore, as the Scripture says, man was made in the image of God; that like, I take it, might be able to see like.'<sup>372</sup> In both these examples, Gregory presents the idea that the nature of humans as made in God's image, is due to God's desire for a creature to experience His good, and that to fully do this requires that the creature is capable of partaking of God. Gregory adds to this idea within *On the Making of Man*. In it he describes how God

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made to image God, we can do so only insofar as our nature as created beings allows – though we may be able to reflect God as well as a piece of glass reflecting the sun, no one would confuse the glass for the sun (*Soul and Resurrection*, 437).

<sup>369</sup> Gen. 1:26-27.

<sup>370</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5.

<sup>371</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5.

<sup>372</sup> Gregory, *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 376.

creates man for no other reason than that He is good; and being such, and having this as His reason for entering upon the creation of our nature, He would not exhibit the power of His goodness in an imperfect form, giving our nature some one of the things at His disposal, and grudging it a share in another ... The language of Scripture ... expresses it concisely by a comprehensive phrase, in saying that man was made “in the image of God”.<sup>373</sup>

Here Gregory approaches the topic from a different angle, and instead of humanity being made in God’s image to be able to partake of his goodness, humans are made in the divine image as an expression of the fullness of God’s goodness. Thus both so that there is a creature capable of enjoying God, and so that God’s goodness is fully expressed in the creation of such a creature, the human is made in God’s image.

### *Aspects of the Image*

One important element within Gregory’s presentation of the image of God is his concept of the *plērōma* or plenitude, for through it one can understand the communal nature of the image which Gregory proposes. This concept, though not overly common within Gregory’s writings,<sup>374</sup> gives a different perspective on the image of God than the more commonly held view of modern individualist trends of modern society.<sup>375</sup> In *On the Making of Man* 16.16, Gregory explains that,

In saying that “God created man” the text indicates, by the indefinite character of the term, all mankind; for was not Adam here named together with the creation, as the history tells us in what follows? yet the name given to the man created is not the particular, but the general name: thus we are led by the employment of the general name of our nature to some such view as this—that in the Divine foreknowledge and power all humanity is included in the first creation...<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.10.

<sup>374</sup> See *Making of Man*, 16.16-18.

<sup>375</sup> For an understanding of the image of God that is more communal than individualistic, see Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 221; and Clines, D. J. A., ‘The Image of God in Man’, *Tyndale Bulletin*, 19 (1968) 61.

<sup>376</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.16.

Here, Gregory clearly outlines his view that the creation narrative is descriptive of God's creation of the plenitude, or all of humanity. Nevertheless, the idea of the plenitude is more specific than a general human creation and extends into the creation of humans in the image of God. Gregory writes: 'so I think that the entire plenitude of humanity was included by the God of all, by His power of foreknowledge, as it were in one body, and that this is what the text teaches us which says, "God created man, in the image of God created He him."<sup>377</sup> What these short quotations describe is Gregory's view that in creating the plenitude, God was in effect, creating every human being who would ever exist.<sup>378</sup> Yet Gregory is not ignorant that every human being was not fully created with Adam in the beginning. To make sense of this apparent difficulty requires understanding that for Gregory, 'the *plērōma* includes both universal characteristics of human beings and the particular individuals who will share in that nature. Thus the universal is inseparable from the particular.'<sup>379</sup> The plenitude entails both a *potential* creation, while at the same time being an *actualised* one, an actualisation which began in Adam and Eve and will be finished with the creation of the last human.<sup>380</sup> Such a dual potential/actual state is conceivable for Gregory because 'to God's power nothing is either past or future.'<sup>381</sup> By God's foreknowledge, He can hold in potential what will exist (the whole of humanity made in the image of God), while also beginning the process through which all will exist in the single actual person of Adam. In describing the extent of the image of God in this way, Gregory is clear that it is the plenitude *of humanity* which is made in God's image. The importance of this idea for Gregory is demonstrated in how it allows all humans to equally be understood to be made in God's image.<sup>382</sup> Given that this is how God creates in the divine image, the question remains as to what elements constitute the image.

One of the central capacities which Gregory connects with the image of God is the ability of the human soul to reflect or mirror God. As David Bentley Hart notes, it is the motif of the mirror which best captures the rationality that unifies Gregory's thought.<sup>383</sup> Gregory

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<sup>377</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.17.

<sup>378</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 32. It is important to note that this idea, along with the concept of the dual creation which shall be discussed below, should not be read as supporting Origen's notion of the pre-existence of souls (Moore and Wilson, 'The Life and Writings of Gregory of Nyssa' in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 17-19) for Gregory explicitly rejects this idea in *Soul and Resurrection*, 458-59 and *Making of Man*, 28.

<sup>379</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 35.

<sup>380</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 41.

<sup>381</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.18.

<sup>382</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.17.

<sup>383</sup> Hart, 'The Mirror of the Infinite', 547. Hart's article goes into much greater detail with regards to the place of the mirror motif within the theology of Gregory of Nyssa than is possible to discuss here. Of particular

uses the understanding of mirroring in a variety of ways with regards to the image of God. First, Gregory suggests that the human mind (and its connection to the rational human soul) was suitably created to mirror all aspects of the divine goodness: ‘the mind was adorned by the likeness of the archetypal beauty, being formed as though it were a mirror to receive that figure of that which it expresses.’<sup>384</sup> It does this in a way unlike the rest of earthly creation, yet the whole of creation bears witness to the glory of God.<sup>385</sup> Second, as already noted, Gregory pushes this thought beyond the soul to the body, and suggests that the body ‘too is adorned by the beauty that the mind gives, being, so to say, a mirror of the mirror.’<sup>386</sup> Third, Gregory uses the description of mirroring to denote the distinction between humans and God, through the analogy of a piece of glass reflecting the sun; though the small glass can accurately reflect the sun, it is not the sun itself.<sup>387</sup> Each of these uses of a mirror motif follows logically upon the use of the mirror with the image of God; Gregory, however, pushes the mirror motif past its natural worldly use. Beyond reflecting what is before it, Gregory suggests a more active and relative understanding of mirroring, whereby the mirror can not only choose where it is being aimed and so reflect good or evil, yet in a sense, it also partakes of what it is imaging and so becomes more alike to what it reflects.

There are two elements, the active and the relative, that provide an understanding of the image of God through the metaphor of a mirror. The mirror of the soul is something which can be aimed by the human (due to their freedom) meaning that humans can direct their mirror either towards God as was intended, or towards the ‘lower levels of existence.’<sup>388</sup> The resulting implications are that humans are only the image of God insofar as they focus themselves upon him; to the extent that humans fail in this, they do not image God: ‘we

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interest is his suggestion that for Gregory, even within God the mirror motif is present, for the Son mirrors the Father (‘The Mirror of the Infinite’, 547-48).

<sup>384</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9. See also Hart, ‘The Mirror of the Infinite’, 549. Although some theologians prior to (such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen) and after Gregory (such as Maximus the Confessor) make a clear distinction between the image and the likeness of God, Gregory himself seems to make little distinction between them. See Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, 121-25; von Balthasar, *Presence and Thought*, 117.

<sup>385</sup> Gregory, *Answer to Eunomius’ Second Book*. In *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, second series*, vol. 5. Translated by William Moore, 250-314. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979. The distinction is one whereby all created earthly things are expressive of their Creator in some way. The human mind however does not merely express the beauty of its Creator, but is made to receive beauty directly from its Creator. The image of the mirror is descriptive of not just a beauty like a well-made painting, but a beauty that is beautiful precisely because of the One whose image it bears.

<sup>386</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 21; Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 231.

<sup>387</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 45.

<sup>388</sup> Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 232. See also Harrison, Nonna Verna. ‘The Human Person as the image and likeness of God.’ In *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, edited by Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff, 81. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.



therefore say that the mind, as being in the image of the most beautiful, itself also remains in beauty and goodness so long as it partakes as far as possible in its likeness to the archetype; but if it were at all to depart from this it is deprived of that beauty in which it was'.<sup>389</sup> This is precisely what has occurred through sin. The next perspective as mentioned above is that Gregory sees the mirror as having an ontological significance; we are changed into what we mirror.<sup>390</sup> Behr notes 'Gregory's point is straightforward: if we fail to follow the ascending direction of creation, to assimilate ourselves to the divine archetypal Beauty, we can only be assimilating ourselves to the lower levels of existence...'<sup>391</sup> Gregory understands this capacity as a positive thing, though only because of his hope in God. Through the human capacity to mirror God, humans can mould themselves into the state which will enable union with the divine.<sup>392</sup> Notwithstanding his hope in the human potential to become like God, Gregory is equally clear that this can only occur for those with the 'utmost purity', something he recognises we do not possess, and are not capable of bringing about on our own: 'human efforts can only go so far as to clear away the filth of sin, and so cause the buried beauty of the soul to shine forth again.'<sup>393</sup> Though humans have a role to play in where they direct themselves, ultimately the cleaning is dependent upon God. Yet despite Gregory's insistence that the image of God has been tarnished by sin,<sup>394</sup> the mirror still remains underneath it all. Once the muck of sin is cleaned away, 'the soul's beauty will again appear.'<sup>395</sup> Such cleansing away of human sin is enabled through the soteriological actions of Christ in taking on flesh in the incarnation so as to restore humanity. What is of importance for this chapter is that in their very makeup as images of God, humans are enabled to mirror God, and to direct their mirror (and so direct what they become). Among earthly creatures, such faculties belong to humans alone and are a significant part of what God wills for the human to do. Connected with these two aspects of the image of God, Gregory also suggests a number of related facets

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<sup>389</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9; Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 232-33.

<sup>390</sup> Gregory, *On Virginity*, ch. 11; Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 232. Gregory is clear that though we become what we mirror (in the section referenced, we become the Light we mirror), we are never equal to the source of what we mirror. In *Soul and Resurrection* (437) Gregory states that just as a piece of glass can reflect the sun, so too we image God; yet neither the glass nor the human is the thing they mirror.

<sup>391</sup> Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 232.

<sup>392</sup> Gregory, *On Virginity*, ch. 11.

<sup>393</sup> Gregory, *On Virginity*, ch. 12.

<sup>394</sup> Gregory, *On Virginity*, ch. 12.

<sup>395</sup> Gregory, *On Virginity*, ch. 12. Gregory (*On Virginity*, ch. 12) also uses two gospel teachings to support his point: (1) that of 'the Kingdom of God is within you' [Luke 17:21] – which he suggests implies that it is within us and part of our nature and need merely be found and (2) the parable of the Lost Drachma [Luke 15:8] – which he suggests is about the image of God, which though lost is not hopelessly so and can be found.

which he understands to be unique to humans (among earthly creatures), most notably rationality and freedom.

Rationality is repeatedly linked by Gregory to his conception of both God, and consequently, humanity created in the divine image.<sup>396</sup> For example, in *The Great Catechism* Gregory writes: ‘Upon that [the intellectual nature] there was fashioned that thing moulded of earth, an “image” copied from the superior Power. Now this living being was man. In him, by an ineffable influence, the godlike beauty of the intellectual nature was mingled.’<sup>397</sup> Warren Smith suggests that for Gregory, humanity’s ‘rational nature is the most basic sense in which we possess a likeness to the divine nature.’<sup>398</sup> Though Gregory never explicitly states which aspect of the human is most alike to the divine, the quotation above from *The Great Catechism*, and the fact that rationality plays such a strong role in the human calling (e.g. in *On the Making of Man*, 8.2 Gregory discusses how even the human form is expressive of a rational nature) would give support for this position. Rationality, however, is not simply linked to God as though it were merely a nice addition to humanity, but ‘man is necessarily rational and is not a man should he lack this capacity.’<sup>399</sup> Humans are, by their very nature as images of God, rational creatures and the human soul ‘finds its perfection in that which is intellectual and rational’.<sup>400</sup>

The connection between humanity and rationality is highlighted by Gregory through his view that the human form was created in such a way as to serve reason (unlike the forms of the rest of the animals).<sup>401</sup> Indeed, it is through their rational nature that humans can freely

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<sup>396</sup> Gregory, alike to Anselm and Maximus, understands humans to be unique among earthly creatures with regards to rationality. Given the rise in nonhuman animal cognition studies that have occurred in recent decades, this understanding of the uniqueness of rationality to humans is one which is not nearly as secure as it once was. The implications which this has for understanding humans as uniquely rational are addressed in the first section of Chapter 3.

<sup>397</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6. For other connections of rationality with humans see Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 33; Moore and Wilson, ‘Notes on the Treatise “On the Making of Man”’, 386; Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.2; Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.164; Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 163.

<sup>398</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 22.

<sup>399</sup> Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.164. Such a central position for what it means to be human is one shared by Anselm, as noted in ch. 1. Anselm however, in addition to discussing the importance of rationality for what it means to be human, also is quite explicit on the teleological nature of rationality, for rationality is ultimately to be used to direct oneself to God.

<sup>400</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 15.2. Gregory here has just described (15.1) a case where true bread, is bread which not only looks like bread, but has the capacity to feed – unlike a stone shaped like bread. In the same way, the true human soul not only has the capacity for life and growth, but also for rationality, and can only truly be itself in the intellectual and rational.

<sup>401</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 24.

rule over their non-rational elements.<sup>402</sup> For Gregory, the rational and irrational are clearly distinct; whereas the rational is guided by good, the irrational is driven by sensuality;<sup>403</sup> whereas irrational creatures can be brought to God by force, rational creatures cannot without destroying their reason-based freedom.<sup>404</sup> Yet such emphasis on the rational over the irrational only goes so far. Humans are the midpoint between these two extremes, and are thus quite accurately referred to as rational animals.<sup>405</sup> Given that humans are both rational and irrational, following their weakened sinful state, not only is each nature negatively affected, but there is now also conflict between the two. Due to this, the rational ‘is more inclined to be dragged downwards by the weight of the irrational nature than is the heavy and earthy element to be exalted by the loftiness of the intellect.’<sup>406</sup> It is clear that humans, as compared to the rest of earthly creatures, are rational by virtue of their creation in the image of God. Such a conception of the image of God predominates as something valued in and of itself, and also as a basis for other important aspects such as freedom and ruling.

The capacity of freedom, one which is rooted in rationality, is another essential characteristic of the image of God. Indeed this is a very important aspect of the image for Gregory who states that in creating the first human, God

would never have deprived him of that most excellent and precious of all goods; I mean the gift implied in being his own master, and having a free will. For if necessity in any way was the master of the life of man, the “image” would have been falsified in that particular part, by being estranged owing to this unlikeness to its archetype. How can that nature which is under a yoke and bondage to any kind of necessity be called an image of a Master Being?<sup>407</sup>

Such freedom is central to Gregory’s understanding of the image of God. One can quickly recognise that freedom is highly valued within the concept of the image as it is seen as one of the highest qualities of God: God is the Ruler of the universe and it is precisely God’s freedom to do as God wishes that best exemplifies this. Thus in imaging God, humans also

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<sup>402</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 56-57; Smith, ‘The Body of Paradise and the Body of the Resurrection: Gender and the Angelic Life in Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*.’ *Harvard Theological Review*, 92:2 (2006) 208.

<sup>403</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 8.

<sup>404</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 31.

<sup>405</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.5; Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.164; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 17; Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 219, 224, 231, 233, 235, 245; Smith, Warren. ‘The Body of Paradise’, 208-11.

<sup>406</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.6.

<sup>407</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 5. See also Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 21.

have the freedom to rule over their own existence and choose how to respond to God and others, and so choose between good and evil.<sup>408</sup> This freedom was shown in regards to the understanding of the image of God as a mirror in which humans are free to choose where it is directed. In all that humans can do then, freedom of will is central. Another aspect of this closely related to the capacity for freedom is the ability to rule over creation, and this is another important element of the image of God to Gregory.

Just as with the capacity for freedom of will, the ability to rule is connected very strongly to Gregory's presentation of the image due to ruling's strong association with God. Gregory states as much in writing 'the fact that it is the image of that Nature which rules over all means nothing else than this, that our nature was created to be royal from the first.'<sup>409</sup> Beyond recognizing this, however, Gregory suggests that the link between the image and ruling is more than mere *capacity* to rule, but is also a *calling*. Humans are made to rule:

by the authority that presides over all things, there was a certain power ordained to hold together and sway the earthly region, constituted for this purpose by the power that administers the Universe. Upon that there was fashioned that thing moulded of earth, an "image" copied from the superior Power. Now this living being was man.'<sup>410</sup>

Here Gregory expresses both that humans have a capacity to rule (humans are 'an "image" copied from the superior Power'), as well as a calling to rule (humans are 'ordained to hold together and sway the earthly region'); in fact, they are 'constituted for this purpose'. In addition, Gregory also utilizes a number of ideas in support of the human calling to rule. First he suggests that the creation narrative lends support in having humanity being created last: 'For not as yet had that great and precious thing, man, come into the world of being; it was not to be looked for that the ruler should appear before the subjects of his rule; but when his

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<sup>408</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.11; Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 173; Harrison, 'The Human Person', 81. In understanding freedom as the capacity to choose between good and evil, Gregory differs from Anselm, who described freedom as the 'capacity for preserving rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude itself' (Anselm, *On Free Will*, ch. 3.). The closest Anselm comes to Gregory's conception of freedom is in Anselm's distinction between freedom proper (noted above), and the power not to be coerced.

<sup>409</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 4.1. See also Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 22; Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 173.

<sup>410</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6. Here Gregory seems to go beyond the merely substantive interpretation of the image of God, for a more functional one. Indeed, Gregory (*Making of Man*, 4.1) even uses some of the same supporting ideas, such as the description of an image of a king representing the king, which have been used to in support of functional interpretations of the image of God based on Mesopotamian and Egyptian uses of the term.

dominion was prepared, the next step was that the king should be manifest.<sup>411</sup> Second, Gregory suggests that the very form of the human body was created to enable humans to rule over creation.<sup>412</sup> Thus in each of these ways, Gregory describes the capacity and calling to rule as another aspect which is essential to his conception of humans as images of God, and in so doing, defining them against the rest of the earthly created order.

### *Connecting Image of God with Irrational Creation*

So far this chapter has addressed and discussed those elements which Gregory conceives as important to an understanding of the image of God which also serve as a means of distinguishing humanity from the rest of the earthly creatures. In distinguishing this way, he shares a similar view with Anselm. These distinctions are not surprising given that the image of God within the Bible is a human-only construct; according to the creation narrative of Genesis 1, only humans are made in the image of God. Gregory often holds quite strongly to his understanding that humans alone are made in the image of God, and the majority of the elements which he suggests are constitutive of it are used to distinguish humans from the rest of the earthly creatures. Despite this, and in contrast to Anselm, in what is perhaps the most central aspect of the image of God there is also a place where Gregory allows for a connection between humanity and the rest of the created order. The way Gregory describes the rational soul as descriptive of a creaturely link between humans and the rest of earthly creation, also opens up the possible encompassing of nonhuman animals within his conception of the image of God, and in so doing, describes a way in which, through becoming human in the incarnation, God took on more than merely humanity.

The rational soul is the most essential element within Gregory's presentation of what constitutes the image of God. As previously discussed, there are a variety of aspects which are vital to understanding Gregory's presentation of the image of God, such as freedom, ruling,<sup>413</sup> and reflecting,<sup>414</sup> however, it is the rational soul which acts as the ontological basis

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<sup>411</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.1.

<sup>412</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.1. For more on Gregory's discussion on the body and its relation to ruling/royalty, see Gregory, *Making of Man*, 4, 7, 8. This idea will be discussed in more detail in the third section of this chapter.

<sup>413</sup> Ludlow (*Gregory of Nyssa*, 173) notes that 'Thus, for Gregory it is true that humanity's God-likeness consists at least primarily in this freedom to be self-governing and to be able to govern the rest of creation, and it thus lies primarily in the soul.'

<sup>414</sup> Smith (*Paradise and Passion*, 21) notes that 'it is the soul that properly speaking was made like the divine, thus mirroring the divine virtues.'

for such things.<sup>415</sup> Beyond these individual capacities, the rational soul is the locus of the image of God in humans. In addition to being the most significant element of the image of God for Gregory as it defines human uniqueness, the rational soul also presents a human commonality with the rest of the created world. In terms of uniqueness, Gregory is very clear that among earthly creatures it is only humans who are rational, an essential aspect of the rational soul. Yet this uniqueness at the same time incorporates all creation together, for the human rational soul acts as a microcosm encompassing all other earthly levels of the soul. Both these ideas are described by Gregory together, who views the creation narrative as descriptive also of the nature of the rational soul:

the power of life and soul may be considered in three divisions. For one is only a power of growth and nutrition supplying what is suitable for the support of the bodies that are nourished, which is called the vegetative soul, and is to be seen in plants ... and there is another form of life besides this, which, while it includes the form above mentioned, is also possessed in addition of the power of management according to sense; and this is to be found in the nature of the irrational animals: for they are not only the subjects of nourishment and growth, but also have the activity of sense and perception. But perfect bodily life is seen in the rational (I mean the human) nature, which both is nourished and endowed with sense, and also partakes of reason and is ordered by mind.<sup>416</sup>

Thus for Gregory the rational soul not only provides a basis for humans to be images of God and allows them to stand as unique creatures of God, it also means that humanity shares an ontological basis (in sharing the vegetative, sensible, and rational soul) with the entire created order, unlike any other creature.

Beyond this, Gregory also describes the uniquely rational human soul as one which was designed by God precisely to share in a range of aspects related to the irrational animals:

Nothing can be more appropriate to the human soul than an intellectual nature which enables us to fully share the lot of irrational animals: concupiscence,

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<sup>415</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 4.1; Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 173.

<sup>416</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.4. Gregory's use of the concept of the microcosm shall be discussed in further detail below. Smith ('The Body of Paradise', 211) astutely makes the point that for Gregory, this is not a tripartite soul (3 types of soul stuck together), but rather a trichotomous soul, which includes each of the types.

anger, appetite for food, capacity for growth, satiety, sleep, digestion, change, excrement and capacities rooted in the soul which belong both to us and irrational beasts.<sup>417</sup>

Such appropriateness is derived from Gregory's desire to show the intimate connection between the body and the rational soul in the human. Based on this, Gregory suggests that the unique intellectual soul of humans is made to allow for humanity to 'share the lot' with the irrational creation. Both these quotations from Gregory show that his conception of the human, and more particularly of the human soul, make possible an understanding of humans as a microcosm of creation, possessing within themselves all of the vital elements shared by every living thing.

### *Section Summary*

This second section examined the nature of the image of God as conceived by Gregory of Nyssa. The image of God was shown to not only entail a wide range of capacities which humans share with the divine, but also to express a calling by God to both enjoy Him and to reflect God so as to partake of that which humans mirror. Such an understanding contained a range of ways to distinguish the human from the nonhuman. Among these, the reflective nature of the image of God as mirror, as well as the human freedom and rationality to choose where to direct such a mirror, described humans as unique among God's earthly creatures. In addition, the calling to rule over creation was also descriptive of the nature of the image of God and used to distinguish humans among earthly creatures. Thus in the majority of aspects Gregory uses to describe the image of God, nonhuman animals are absent. While this is the case for the majority, it is not true of all aspects, and indeed, a connection with the nonhuman is present in what is the most central aspect of Gregory's conception of the image of God, the rational soul. The human soul acts as the ontological basis for the other aspects discussed, e.g. it is the rational soul which is the mirror through which humans can image God, and it is the rational soul which provides the capacity for rationality. As Gregory describes it, the human soul is necessarily comprised of the same elements as all living things; it is a soul which entails a combination of plant, animal, and rational souls, and so encompasses them all. Therefore though humans alone are images of God, through the central aspect of the rational soul in the image of God, humans are creatures which contain

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<sup>417</sup> Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J .140-141.

within their nature, elements which they share with the rest of the nonhuman creation. I will expand on this idea in more detail below with regards to the other aspects of human nature which Gregory describes that humans share with the rest of the irrational creation.

### **Section 3: The Irrational Aspect of Humanity**

#### *Introduction*

The second section of this chapter examined the nature of the human insofar as they are the image of God. As Gregory reads the creation narrative of Genesis 1-2, however, he suggests that this is not where God ended his creative work, but that God also created humans with aspects of the irrational creation. Though Gregory often tends to separate the idea of humans as the image of God from these secondary elements of their creation, he also repeatedly suggests that humans were created with both rational and irrational natures to fulfill God's purpose for them and the rest of creation. Such a dual-natured constitution has large implications for not only human callings, but also for the divine incarnation. Yet Gregory seems at odds with himself at times, in some places potentially viewing the irrational nature of humans as purely of this world, while in other spaces giving it value and eschatological purpose. Despite such apparent inconsistencies, Gregory can be read in such a way that makes sense of these seeming discrepancies. This section will examine the nature of the 'double creation' of humans found in Gregory's writings, and focus on the nature of the human which we share with the irrational creation. Of these elements, Gregory goes into by far the most depth in his discussion on human sexuality and the passions. While at times Gregory seems to suggest human sexuality is merely a temporary solution to the problem of human sin, he also describes humans as microcosms which are made to benefit the whole of creation through their constitution of both rational and irrational elements. I will demonstrate how the nature of the human as one which both images God, and yet shares commonality with the irrational creation, is an essential part of what it means to be human for Gregory. Such a constitution is descriptive of the ways in which humans are intended to relate to the rest of the created order.



Whether Gregory of Nyssa conceives of the creation of humanity in terms of a distinct ‘two-stage’ creative act, or a more united set of actions is a question which has received a good deal of attention in the past 50 years.<sup>418</sup> The question of a single or double creation narrative is relevant here insofar as it is during the creation narrative that God creates a being in His image and defines human nature. Given its importance in studies of Gregory of Nyssa, and whether the creative narratives are suggestive of an essential inclusion or exclusion of the irrational in human nature, a few brief comments are worthwhile. There are two main views which are based around *On the Making of Man*, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, and *The Great Catechism*. The first view describes two distinct creative events; one in which God creates humans as His image (Gen. 1.26-27b), and a second where God creates humans as male and female in light of God’s foreknowledge of the Fall (Gen. 1.27c).<sup>419</sup> In this view, sexuality acts as a protective response to human sin, for it is through sexuality that humans can increase in number given the resulting death caused by the Fall. True humanity, or essential humanity,<sup>420</sup> is seen to reside primarily within the first creative act wherein God created humans according to His image. The second view agrees that within Gregory there are two aspects to creation (creation in the image, and creation as male and female), yet it does not agree with the distinct division placed between the two. Instead of one event where God creates His image, and another distinct event where God creates humans as male and female, the second position holds that the first creative act was one of *potential*, focusing on human nature, whereas the second act is when God actually does create humans in the persons of Adam and Eve.<sup>421</sup> What seems to motivate the majority of commentators to discuss this point is an attempt either to focus more on humans as primarily spiritual creatures, or to view them as a microcosm possessing both spiritual and physical in their very essence. The view which suggests creation in potential and actuality seems the more

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<sup>418</sup> See for example Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 157-162; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 28-42; Tsirpanlis, Constantine. *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991, 48-49; Zachhuber, *Human Nature*, 156-70; Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 219-47; Parmentier, Martien. ‘Greek Patristic Foundations for a Theological Anthropology of Women in their Distinctiveness as Human Beings.’ *Anglican Theological Review*, 84.3 (2002) 557.

<sup>419</sup> For those supporting this position, see Zachhuber, *Human Nature*, 156-70; Parmentier, ‘Greek Patristic Foundations’, 557.

<sup>420</sup> Bouteneff (*Beginnings*, 157-68) uses the terms ‘essential’ humanity for the essence of the image bearing creation, and ‘existential’ humanity for the humanity we currently experience post-Fall.

<sup>421</sup> For those supporting this position Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 28-42; Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought*, 48-49; Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 157-162, Moore and Wilson, ‘Notes on the Treatise “On the Making of Man”’, 386, and Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 219-47.

favourable position for two reasons. First, this reading of the creative narrative is consistent with Gregory's view of the *plērōma*. As discussed in the section above, the *plērōma* or plenitude is a creation of potential which was brought into reality through the creation of Adam and Eve, and then every human afterwards. God did not create every human on the earth as the image of God at once, but created the plenitude in potential, and only after began to realise this through an extended process of actualisation. In the same way then, God can be conceived as creating humans as images of God in potential, and then actualising this conception with humans as male and female in the persons of Adam and Eve. The other reason for preferring the second view of human creation is that it enables more coherence within Gregory's own thought regarding the human calling towards being a microcosm of creation. For these reasons, and because of the value he repeatedly gives to such an idea,<sup>422</sup> this chapter takes the view that this dual-nature element is an essential aspect of what it means to be human. Given this, the first aspect I will discuss which human nature shares with irrational creation is the commonality of having sexuality.

#### *Attributes Shared with Earthly Creation*

Alike to the dual-creation narrative, the place of human sexuality within the theology of Gregory of Nyssa has given rise to a relatively large amount of interest in recent times.<sup>423</sup> With such popularity regarding Gregory's views on sexuality within the human construct, it is of little surprise to find that there is no settled opinion as to how Gregory conceives of sex. A number of these arguments have been noted above with regards to the role that sexuality has in Gregory's conception of a dual-creation. On one hand there are those who suggest that for Gregory, the place of human sexuality is entirely economic; sexuality is merely a temporal device given by God to humans to deal with human mortality and to provide a method of continuing and increasing their numbers following the Fall.<sup>424</sup> Gregory himself may suggest as much in writing that God 'formed for our nature that contrivance for increase which befits those who had fallen into sin, implanting in mankind, instead of the angelic

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<sup>422</sup> See for example Gregory, *Making of Man*, 1.2; 2.2; 8.5; 16.8; 18.3; Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6; Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 433; Gregory, *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>423</sup> See for example Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 159-162, 165-166; Hardy, Edward. *Christology of the Later Fathers*. London: SCM Press, 1965, 239-240; Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 167-176; Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought*, 49; Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 219-24, 234-37, 244-47; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 15-17, 29-30; Smith, 'The Body of Paradise', 208-11.

<sup>424</sup> Such a view is based primarily on Gregory's *Making of Man*, 16-18. Those espousing this view include Smith, 'The Body of Paradise', 29; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 28-29; and Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*, 239-40.

majesty of nature, that animal and irrational mode by which they now succeed one another.<sup>425</sup> Such a claim may be taken as support for reading of sexuality as economic. Gregory further substantiates this view by his use of Galatians 3.28, where in Christ as the Prototype there is neither male nor female, so too for those in his image.<sup>426</sup>

Despite this support, there are those who suggest that Gregory is not portraying an economic view of human sexuality and is instead proposing that humans are by their very nature intended to be sexual. John Behr maintains such a position and claims that ‘Gregory explores the existence of human beings as rational animals, embracing the extremes of creation in their own being, the asexual rational, that which is in the image of God, and the irrational sexual, that which humans share with the animals.’<sup>427</sup> This position relies heavily on other elements of Gregory’s writings such as his description of humans as a microcosm,<sup>428</sup> and understanding the human as *necessarily* comprised of rational and irrational elements rather than *necessarily* rational, and *economically* irrational. Finally, there are those who maintain a position which lies in the middle, suggesting that Gregory does indeed claim both; humans are created to be microcosms and yet human sexuality (a direct link with nonhuman creation) is merely a response to sin and not essential to human nature.<sup>429</sup> Pierre Bouteneff argues that:

Sex distinction is nonessential (from the point of view of the divine image) and yet essential (from the point of view of the human vocation in and for the world). Gregory never fully resolves the tension between these views, and it seems that he knows it and thus clearly acknowledges the mystery of the underlying truth and the provisional nature of his speculation.<sup>430</sup>

This final proposal suggests Gregory simply does not address this question in a way which gives one clear answer.

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<sup>425</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 17.4.

<sup>426</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.7.

<sup>427</sup> Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 219.

<sup>428</sup> Found in Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.2; Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6; Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 433, 441.

<sup>429</sup> See for example Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 159-62, 165-66; and Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 167-76.

<sup>430</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 160. Smith (*Paradise and Passion*, 17) acknowledges that the stream of thought within Gregory could lead, if one followed it, to a position like that of Behr (which focuses more heavily on an essential aspect of sexuality for humans), yet claims that even though this is so, Gregory himself did not proceed this way.

Of these three interpretations, the second which understands human sexuality as an essential aspect of what it means to be human is the most preferable, for it coincides well with his view of the human person as a microcosm of creation, and falls into place when understanding the creative event as two-staged; the first being of potential and the other of actualization.<sup>431</sup> Though Gregory does suggest that humans, *as the images of God* were not intended to have sexuality (as God does not possess such a feature), humans are more than this:

While two natures – the Divine and incorporeal nature, and the irrational life of brutes – are separated from each other as extremes, human nature is the mean between them: for in the compound nature of man we may behold a part of each of the natures I have mentioned, – of the Divine, the rational and intelligent element, which does not admit the distinction of male and female; of the irrational, our bodily form and structure, divided into male and female: for each of these elements is certainly to be found in all that partakes of human life.<sup>432</sup>

Thus while humans are images of God in their rational nature, they are also connected to non-rational nature through their creation into sexes. Indeed, this understanding can make sense of the references above used in support of understanding the human as economically sexual; the ‘animal and irrational mode by which they now succeed one another’<sup>433</sup> is not sexuality, but sexual reproduction based on irrationally-lead passions. Such passions are another area where Gregory conceives of the human creature having a connection with the rest of the non-rational creation.

Understanding the place of the passions within Gregory’s conception of humanity is no easy task, for Gregory’s uses of the term ‘passions’ is not entirely consistent. In *Against Eunomius* Book 6 §3 Gregory differentiates between true passions which include ‘that which is opposed to the virtuous unimpassioned state,’ and ‘the peculiar attributes of our nature, which, by a kind of customary abuse of terms, are called by the same name of “passion,”’ such as birth, sleep, toil, etc. The first of these are sinful, while the second are not. Despite

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<sup>431</sup> It must be recognised that Gregory does not seem to have explicitly stated one way or the other which position was his own, and that these three ways of reading Gregory are precisely that; ways of reading what is an unsure topic within Gregory’s writings.

<sup>432</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.9.

<sup>433</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 17.4.

this distinction, Gregory falls into using such a ‘customary abuse of terms’ himself, and so careful study is required when reading Gregory’s description regarding the passions to distinguish those Gregory finds sinful, from those which are part of the human creaturely condition.

Just as Gregory is abundantly clear that God is not sexual, so also is he that God is free of passions.<sup>434</sup> Gregory is well aware that this presents issues if humans are to be understood as images of God, for humans are not only engendered creatures, but also share the passions with the rest of the earthly realm. His most significant discussions of passions with regards to humans occur in *On the Soul and the Resurrection*<sup>435</sup> and *On the Making of Man*.<sup>436</sup> In both of these texts, Gregory states that though human likeness to God requires a lack of passions, humans also possess a share in non-rational nature and attributes.<sup>437</sup> Gregory suggests that,

these attributes, then, human nature took to itself from the side of the brutes; for those qualities with which brute life was armed for self-perseveration, when transferred to human life, became passions; for the carnivorous animals are preserved by their anger, and those which breed largely by their love of pleasure; cowardice preserves the weak, fear that which is easily taken by more powerful animals, and greediness those of great bulk; and to miss anything that tends to pleasure is for the brutes a matter of pain.<sup>438</sup>

Here and in the sections following in chapter 18 of *On the Making of Man*, Gregory describes the passions in a negative manner, and suggests that those aspects of nonhuman animals which were designed for their benefit, when used in humans and aided by thought, become

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<sup>434</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.12; Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 25-26;

<sup>435</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 441-43.

<sup>436</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.

<sup>437</sup> Behr (‘The Rational Animal’, 238) distinguishes between humans as having an irrational and bestial aspect within their composition which connects them with nonhuman animals, and the passionate, which occurs when the rational mind becomes irrationally driven by the more bodily aspects. His desire to do so is to keep Gregory from claiming that both the irrational aspects of our created existence, as well as the passionate drives, are economic attributes of the human. Gregory does seem to make this distinction within *Soul and Resurrection* (442) – ‘But if reason drops the reins and is dragged behind like a charioteer who has got entangled in his car, then these instincts are changed into fierceness, just as we see happens amongst the brutes.’ However within his far more detailed discussion within *Making of Man*, Gregory makes no such a distinction and describes a ‘kinship of passions’ with animals (18.1), and a likeness to the animals through ‘passionate impulses’ (18.3).

<sup>438</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.2. See also Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 441-43. In these two works, Gregory’s emphases are different; whereas Gregory discusses the role of sex and its relation to the passions much more strongly in *Making of Man*, in *Soul and Resurrection* Gregory emphasises the role of humans as a microcosm in having passions.

vices. As noted, however, Gregory is less precise in his discussion of the passions, and his use of the term, than might be hoped for. In some cases, the passionate attributes are described in negative ways by Gregory, as something humans need to remove from themselves.<sup>439</sup> Elsewhere, however, Gregory describes the passions, and proper human use of them, in morally neutral terms. Gregory writes that:

these are all those phaenomena within us that we call “passions”; which have not been allotted to human nature for any bad purpose at all (for the Creator would most certainly be the author of evil, if in *them*, so deeply rooted as they are in our nature, any necessities of wrong-doing were found), but according to the use which our free will puts them to, these emotions of the soul become the instruments of virtue or of vice.<sup>440</sup>

Gregory claims that the passions were ‘bequeathed’ to humans from God, and that they are morally neutral; it is how they are used which determines their moral standing. Within *On the Making of Man* Gregory makes this second point quite clear: ‘if reason instead assumes sway over such emotions, each of them is transmuted to a form of virtue; for anger produces courage, terror caution, fear obedience, hatred aversion from vice, the power of love the desire for what is truly beautiful.’<sup>441</sup> To make sense of these seemingly opposing views requires understanding the passions as neither inherently good nor evil, but as morally neutral, and it is the human rational response to them which determines their moral potential.<sup>442</sup> The passions, or rather, the capacity for passions is one aspect through which humans are created in a way similar to the irrational animal creation. As noted on the rational soul, Gregory states in *Against Apollinarius* that ‘Nothing can be more appropriate to the human soul than an intellectual nature which enables us to fully share the lot of irrational animals,’ and then he lists a range of passions such as concupiscence.<sup>443</sup> In this way Gregory expresses how humans, by virtue of their created earthly status, and through their possession of a rational soul, share passions in common with nonhuman animals. Similarly, both are

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<sup>439</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 449, 451, 464-65.

<sup>440</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 442.

<sup>441</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.5. Gregory also discusses a positive use of the passions within *On Virginity*, ch. 18, and Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.140-41. The positive potential for passions is an idea that was later taken up by Maximus the Confessor (*Ad Thal. I*). For Gregory’s influence on Maximus regarding the passions, see Blowers, Paul. ‘Gentiles of the Soul: Maximus the Confessor on the Substructure and Transformation of Human Passions.’ *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 4.1 (1996) 57-85.

<sup>442</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 442; Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 161; Harrison, ‘The Human Person’, 84.

<sup>443</sup> Gregory, *Against Apollinarius*, J.140-41.

unlike God who is wholly untouched by passions.<sup>444</sup> The capacity for passions is for Gregory another way humans have a necessary connection with nonhuman animals.

### *Human Form*

Gregory's emphasis on the spiritual aspects of the human is carried over into all aspects of the human creature. Though humans image God insofar as they direct themselves towards God, and through so doing make proper use of their rationality, freedom, ruling, etc., there is a real sense in which Gregory connects such valued aspects to the physical human form:

the mind was adorned by the likeness of the archetypal beauty, being formed as though it were a mirror to receive that figure of that which it expresses, we consider that the nature which is governed by it [the human body] is attached to the mind in the same relation, and that it too is adorned by the beauty that the mind gives, being, so to say, a mirror of the mirror.<sup>445</sup>

Gregory describes how the body acts as a 'mirror of the mirror' in a number of ways. First, the upright stance of the human form shows that humans were made for a royal existence, for 'man's form is upright, and extends aloft towards heaven, and looks upwards: and these are marks of sovereignty which show his royal dignity.'<sup>446</sup> He then adds to this by suggesting that the very fact that humans lack the beneficial aspects given to other creatures (such as speed, strength, claws, etc), is because humans 'would have neglected [their] rule over the other creatures if [they] had no need of the co-operation of [their] subjects; whereas now, the needful services of our life are divided among the individual animals that are under our sway, for this reason – to make our dominion over them necessary.'<sup>447</sup> Second, the human form is made in such a way as to be an instrument of the rational soul.<sup>448</sup> This is exemplified in a number of ways. Gregory suggests that human hands can be used by the rational mind to write.<sup>449</sup> Following this, Gregory proposes that not only do hands allow for such activities as

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<sup>444</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 28.

<sup>445</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 12.9.

<sup>446</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.1. See also Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 24-5; Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 226.

<sup>447</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 7.2. See also Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 230.

<sup>448</sup> Moore and Wilson, 'Notes on the Treatise "On the Making of Man"', 386; Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 173; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 24.

<sup>449</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.2.

writing, but they also enable humans to eat with their hands, rather than their faces, leaving their mouth capable in form for speech.<sup>450</sup> Thus through such aspects as upright form, hands for working, and a mouth for speaking, Gregory suggests that the human form, though not strictly speaking the image of God, is an image of the image as it enables the soul to act rationally and allows humans to live out their humanness, sharing both the divine image, and the physical form of other earthly creatures. Though the human form is unique, humans share physicality with the rest of the created world (as opposed to angels), for they are dual-natured having both a soul and a body.<sup>451</sup> Such a connection with the rest of the earthly realm is an element which Gregory discusses in greater detail with regards to their microcosmic nature.

### *Microcosm*

One final element, and undoubtedly the most significant for understanding the connection between the human and nonhuman animal that is related to Gregory's presentation of humans and the image of God, is the idea of humans as a microcosm. This idea was not only popular for Gregory and his contemporaries,<sup>452</sup> but had a history likely derived from Democritus,<sup>453</sup> and is also found in Plato<sup>454</sup> and Aristotle.<sup>455</sup> Gregory uses this idea in a number of his works including *On the Making of Man*,<sup>456</sup> *On the Soul and the Resurrection*,<sup>457</sup> *The Great Catechism*,<sup>458</sup> and *On Infants' Early Deaths*.<sup>459</sup> Through these various writings, Gregory makes use of the microcosm concept in many ways and explains the importance of the concept while also providing a small assortment of reasons as to why God created humans as microcosms, including the inclusion of the rest of creation into the plans of God.

To begin with, in a range of his writings, Gregory states outright that humans are created by God as a microcosm of creation. From *On the Making of Man*, Gregory suggests

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<sup>450</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 8.8.

<sup>451</sup> On Gregory having the view that angels are rational beings that are bodiless, see Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 444.

<sup>452</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 160.

<sup>453</sup> Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Anthropology in Theological Perspectives*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. New York: T&T Clark, 2004, 27.

<sup>454</sup> Plato, *Timaeus*, 40-65. In *Timaeus and Critias*. Translated by Desmond Lee, 27-124. London: Penguin Books, 1977.

<sup>455</sup> Aristotle appears to suggest this briefly and without comment in his *Physics*. Translated by Robin Waterfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, 8.2, 252b.

<sup>456</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.2; 16.

<sup>457</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 441.

<sup>458</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6.

<sup>459</sup> Gregory, *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 375.



that God made humans as ‘a two-fold organization, blending the Divine with the earthy,’<sup>460</sup> and later on agrees with those he calls heathen writers who suggest the human is ‘a little world, composed of the same elements with the universe.’<sup>461</sup> Within *The Great Catechism* chapter 6, Gregory writes that by the wisdom of God in the human ‘there is an admixture and interpenetration of the sensible with the intellectual department.’<sup>462</sup> In addition, the same idea of humans as a microcosm is also present within *On Infants’ Early Deaths*,<sup>463</sup> as well as *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, the latter in which Gregory claims that ‘the creation of man is related as coming last, as of one who took up into himself every single form of life, both that of plants and that which is seen in brutes.’<sup>464</sup> Through examining these various works it is abundantly clear that for Gregory, humans are made by God as a microcosm of creation.

Given the presence of humans as a microcosm within the writings of Gregory, the reason for God’s choice in making them as such still needs to be addressed. Gregory gives a few different answers to this question ranging from the anthropocentric, to the cosmocentric, and finally to the soteriological. In the first case, Gregory suggests within *On the Making of Man* that ‘for this reason He gives him as foundations the instincts of a two-fold organization, blending the Divine with the earthy, that by means of both he may be naturally and properly disposed to each enjoyment, enjoying God by means of his more divine nature, and the good things of earth by the sense that is akin to them.’<sup>465</sup> Here Gregory indicates that the dual-nature of humanity is given such that humans could enjoy the good things of both realms. The second reason Gregory gives for why humans were created as a microcosm is that ‘while two natures – the Divine and incorporeal nature, and the irrational life of brutes – are separated from each other as extremes, human nature is the mean between them.’<sup>466</sup> Thus through their possession of both the heavenly and the earthly, humans enable a connection between these two cosmological extremes.

Finally, Gregory describes the sanctifying implications of such a connection between these extremes. In *On Infants’ Early Deaths* Gregory suggests that ‘in order that the earth may not be completely devoid of the local indwelling of the intellectual and the immaterial,

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<sup>460</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.2.

<sup>461</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.1.

<sup>462</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6

<sup>463</sup> Gregory, *On Infants’ Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>464</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 441.

<sup>465</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 2.2.

<sup>466</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 16.9.

man (these writers tell us) was fashioned by the Supreme forethought, and his earthy parts moulded over the intellectual and godlike essence of his soul.<sup>467</sup> Gregory claims that dual human nature exists such that the earth would not miss out on the intellectual and immaterial aspects of the cosmos, but would get to share in them via the representational human. Gregory, however, goes beyond suggesting their microcosmic nature is only to enable the intellectual to exist among the sensible. Within a discussion on the divisions between the intellectual and the sensible (elsewhere referred to as the rational and irrational), Gregory notes in *The Great Catechism* that humans were made to not only bridge the gap between these two extremes, but also to give a value to the sensible which it would otherwise not have. He writes:

Now, by a provision of the supreme Mind there is an intermixture of the intellectual with the sensible world, in order that nothing in creation may be thrown aside as worthless, as says the Apostle, or be left without its portion of the Divine fellowship. On this account it is that the commixture of the intellectual and sensible in man is effected by the Divine Being, as the description of the cosmogony instructs us. It tells us that God, taking dust of the ground, formed the man, and by an inspiration from Himself He planted life in the work of His hand, that thus the earthy might be raised up to the Divine, and so one certain grace of equal value might pervade the whole creation, the lower nature being mingled with the supramundane.<sup>468</sup>

Here, based upon the dual human nature which encompasses the whole created order, the whole of the created order is given value by being raised up to the Divine, and a grace of equal value is enabled to run throughout the whole of the cosmos. Earlier in the same section, Gregory similarly claims that humans are a microcosm ‘in order that all things may equally have a share in the beautiful, and no single one of existing things be without its share in that superior world.’<sup>469</sup> Precisely how such consequences follow for the material creation beyond humanity, Gregory goes into no more detail other than stating this is a reality of the human construction as microcosm.

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<sup>467</sup> Gregory, *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>468</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6. A quite similar point is made by Gregory in *On Infants' Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>469</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6.

From these examples it becomes clear that for Gregory, the creation of humanity entails far more than their creation as images of God. Bouteneff summarises this position well in saying that the human is not only an image of God, but is also ‘a microcosmic summation of spiritual, animal, and material creation.’<sup>470</sup> Such a summation allows for a range of consequences, each of which shows the value which God has for the nonhuman creation and God’s inclusive intentions for the whole of the cosmos. Behr suggests that ‘human beings, encompassing all lower levels of existence, are to raise, in themselves, all of these dimensions of creation to their true dignity, gracing that which is merely irrational by a rational employment.’<sup>471</sup> Thus humans, alone among God’s creatures, possess within themselves each aspect of creation so that they can enjoy both divine and earthly aspects of life, and also live out their purpose of drawing all creation together. For Gregory, the human being can be conceived of as an intermixture of the rational and irrational, and this is intentionally so by Divine will, for the benefit of the whole of creation.

Yet despite these claims, Gregory does very little to describe more precisely how such a situation might practically be made possible. How humans, as images of God and microcosmic creatures, might enable the grace of God to pervade the whole creation is not made clear. Nor how, through the human, nothing in creation will be ‘left without its portion of the Divine fellowship.’<sup>472</sup> *That* the human is a crucially important creature for the whole of creation due to their creation as microcosmic images of God is abundantly clear. *How* such a constitution is lived out practically to achieve such results is not. At times Gregory seems to suggest that God’s focus is not so much on having His grace and fellowship be experienced by all creation, as by all *types* of creation, both heavenly and earthly. Within *On Infants’ Early Deaths*, Gregory writes that humans are made up of rational and irrational elements ‘in order that the earth may not be completely devoid of the local indwelling of the intellectual and the immaterial,’ and so that God ‘may in all parts of the creation be glorified by means of intellectual natures.’<sup>473</sup> Here, the emphasis appears to be on the various realms of existence, rather than all the creatures within them. As already quoted above, however, Gregory also writes that God creates humans as He does ‘in order that nothing in creation may be thrown aside as worthless ... or be left without its portion of the Divine fellowship,’<sup>474</sup> and that ‘all

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<sup>470</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 158.

<sup>471</sup> Behr, ‘The Rational Animal’, 224.

<sup>472</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6.

<sup>473</sup> Gregory, *On Infants’ Early Deaths*, 375.

<sup>474</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6.

things may equally have a share in the beautiful.<sup>475</sup> This idea seems to include not just the heavenly and earthly realms, but everything in creation. Alike to the practicality of his sanctifying role for humans, this is a tension which Gregory does not seem to resolve.

### *Human Nature in Eschatological Perspective*

One of the vital aspects for understanding Gregory's conception of the image of God and the nature of the human is his distinction between the current state of humanity and the ideal. To appreciate this aspect requires knowing how Gregory utilises the concept of time, for Gregory discusses past, present and future together such that there is a temporal reversal of creation, whereby perfection is not actualised until the eschatological consummation.<sup>476</sup> Gregory reads the creation narratives of Genesis in light of the teachings of the New Testament (such as Gal. 3.28),<sup>477</sup> and his 'teaching on creation and on the generation of humanity was narrated exclusively through the lens of regeneration, or restoration in Christ.'<sup>478</sup> This idea works both ways: not only is the creation of humanity in the beginning informed by the promise of Christ, but the resurrection offered by Christ is one of restoration to what was offered in the beginning.<sup>479</sup> Bouteneff notes that such restoration entails certain elements of humanity which we experience now being shed, and what will be shed will be 'any characteristics not definitive of essential human nature'<sup>480</sup> for 'the resurrection will be a restoration of our nature to its original (image-bearing) state.'<sup>481</sup> Gregory, referencing St. Paul, suggests that 'For "this corruptible must put on incorruption"; and this incorruption and glory and honour and power are those distinct and acknowledged marks of Deity which once belonged to him who was created in God's image, and which we hope for hereafter.'<sup>482</sup> Thus through his focus on Christ and the eschatological restoration which he offers, Gregory clarifies the concept of the human creation in the image of God, and ultimate human destiny.

The question as to what makes up the eschatological human nature described by Gregory is not an overly clear one, yet with careful reading an answer is certainly possible.

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<sup>475</sup> Gregory, *Catechism*, ch. 6.

<sup>476</sup> Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 220; Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 38.

<sup>477</sup> Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 28.

<sup>478</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 168. In this way, Gregory was utilizing Origen's concept of *apokatastasis*, where the end shall be like the beginning (Smith, *Paradise and Passion*, 38).

<sup>479</sup> Gregory himself states that 'Now the resurrection promises us nothing else than the restoration of the fallen to their ancient state.' (*Making of Man*, 17.2). Gregory makes the same point in *Soul and Resurrection*, 465-66.

<sup>480</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 162.

<sup>481</sup> Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 162.

<sup>482</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 467, as noted by Daley, "Heavenly Man" and "Eternal Christ", 485.

Gregory undoubtedly emphasises the rational aspects of humanity over the irrational ones which humans share with animals. For instance, Gregory repeatedly claims that human sexual procreation which humans share with animals was a result of the Fall, and a more angelic (and rational) way was intended.<sup>483</sup> This has led some to suggest that sexuality itself is merely an economic attribute, and thus not part of human nature.<sup>484</sup> The same idea could be said of Gregory's response to the passions, whereby the passions are purely something due to the Fall, and have no place within an understanding of an eschatological appreciation of human nature. Both claims are dependent on understanding true human nature as only that which is constitutive of the image of God. If one takes only the image of God as the goal and intent of God for humanity, then sexuality, passions, and all else that humans share with nonhuman creation are necessarily 'extras', added due to the Fall and therefore non-essential.<sup>485</sup> If human nature is made up of not just the image of God, however, but also those elements shared with the rest of creation, then this enables a different understanding of exactly what Gregory is critical of towards the irrational creation. With regards to the human creation as male and female, the issue is not sexuality but a procreation based upon pleasure which humans were enabled to use for reproduction, rather than one based upon reason which humans would have shared with the angels.<sup>486</sup> It is the method of procreation, rather than sexuality, which is not part of human nature. Likewise, the passions can be seen as part of human nature which we share with animals if it is realised that for Gregory, the passions are themselves morally neutral. Indeed Gregory describes a number of ways the passions can be used virtuously when guided by reason.<sup>487</sup> Thus it is not the passions, but a life ruled by the passions rather than reason, which Gregory considers to be improper to a human nature made up as a microcosm of rational and irrational creation.

Perhaps the clearest expression of this distinction comes from Gregory within *On the Soul and the Resurrection* in which he describes a process of becoming our eschatological selves within the resurrection:

Seeing, then, that all the infusions of the life of the brute into our nature were not in us before our humanity descended through the touch of evil into

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<sup>483</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 17.4.

<sup>484</sup> Smith, 'The Body of Paradise', 212-219.

<sup>485</sup> To read an account of such a view see Smith, 'The Body of Paradise'.

<sup>486</sup> Gregory, *The Making of Man*, 17.2, 4; Behr, 'The Rational Animal', 224.

<sup>487</sup> Gregory, *Making of Man*, 18.5. Gregory also discusses a positive use of the passions within *On Virginity*, ch. 18.

passions, most certainly, when we abandon those passions, we shall abandon all their visible results. ... Just as if a man, who, clad in a ragged tunic, has divested himself of the garb, feels no more its disgrace upon him, so we too, when we have cast off that dead unsightly tunic made from the skins of brutes and put upon us (for I take the “coats of skins” to mean that conformation belonging to a brute nature with which we were clothed when we became familiar with passionate indulgence) ... and such accretions are sexual intercourse, conception, parturition, impurities, suckling, feeding, evacuation, gradual growth to full size, prime of life, old age, disease, and death.<sup>488</sup>

Here, what is rejected by Gregory is not those things which we share with the rest of nonhuman creation, but rather those cases in which our passionate nature is indulged, or those things which are less rational than they should be. Thus it is not sexuality, but sexual intercourse as part of the ‘irrational skin’ which is to be removed. Likewise, it is not the human capacity to share passions with the animals, but rather those things which Gregory seems to think have no part in creaturely existence as originally intended by God, e.g. old age, disease, and death that will be discarded. Certain aspects of creaturely existence, not earthly creaturely existence, itself will be rejected.

### *Section Summary*

While the second section addressed the nature and place of the image of God, in this final section I examined the other side of human nature; that of the irrational nature shared with the rest of creation. Through such elements as a physical form, sexuality, and passions, humans share elements with the rest of the created order. Beyond these, however, humans are described by Gregory to be microcosms of creation, possessing within themselves elements of the whole creation. It is precisely as this microcosmic creature that humans are made, and they are made in this way for the benefit of the whole of the created order, so that all creation can be brought up to God. At times Gregory seems to suggest that the irrational nature is both purely economic as well as an essential aspect of humanity. A careful reading, however, shows that Gregory’s apparent dislike of the creaturely existence humans share with the rest of the earthly order is descriptive only of certain elements Gregory sees as unfit for humans, and not all such elements. Thus the irrational element of humans is consistently present in his

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<sup>488</sup> Gregory, *Soul and Resurrection*, 464-65.

conception of human nature. This understanding of the human has necessary implications for understanding the incarnation. Since Christ took on the whole of human nature, this includes both their rational aspects as well as their irrational. As a microcosmic creature, humans have a direct connection with the rest of creation. Though Gregory does not conceive of the rest of creation as fallen, he begins to provide a means by which they could be redeemed through the incarnate God. Since God became that creature which exists in direct relation with the whole of earthly creation, the incarnation of God as a human enables a means (lacking in Anselm) by which God might redeem the whole of creation. Indeed, the human has a particular role in doing so, for it is through them that creation can achieve its goal of experiencing the grace and fellowship of God. Yet how humans participate in this – how they live out their nature as microcosmic creatures – is not explained by Gregory. Although he brings up the idea a number of times, he provides little depth as to how the microcosmic nature of humans is to be expressed.

## **Conclusion**

Gregory's understanding of the incarnation is an engaging account regarding the focus of God's actions in the incarnation. At the root of his understanding as to why God became incarnate is the problem of sin. Due to the negative influence of sin upon his creative order, most specifically upon the human creature, God became incarnate. Yet within Gregory's account of the incarnation stands the human creature possessing both rational and irrational natures. The rational, as expressed most significantly through their being made in the image of God, is the most central aspect of what it means to be human. It is as the image of God that humans possess the capacity to be the creature God intended for them to be, mirroring the divine and partaking of all the varied goodness that God is. God's incarnation as a human was largely to restore the capacity for humans to mirror God, and to overcome the tarnishing effect that sin has had on human nature. Gregory, however, has a more detailed understanding of who the human is than merely the image of God; connected to this central aspect also exists the irrational nature which they possess. Through both the image of God and their irrational nature, humans are connected to the rest of the nonhuman earthly realm, and this connection has implications for understanding how humans are related to the nonhuman creation.

Gregory's presentation of the human gives two ways in which humans are ontologically linked to the rest of the nonhuman creation. In the first case, though the image of God is primarily constructed in such a way that establishes distinctions between humanity and the rest of creation, how Gregory understands the human soul to be constituted (made up of vegetative soul, sensible soul, and rational soul) is descriptive of a direct connection between human and nonhuman. Yet the second case, that humans are made of rational and irrational natures, is the one Gregory makes the most use of. Humans then, by their very makeup, share a connection with the rest of creation. This idea is brought even further by Gregory in his description of humans as microcosms of creation, as holding within their constitution a link with the whole of the rest of creation. Yet this is not where Gregory's theology leaves the relation between human and nonhuman. Within one also finds a connection between not just human nature as microcosmic, but also a linked human calling as microcosm, and the rest of creation. Gregory describes how humans have a sanctifying role within creation, acting such that nothing in creation is left without its share in the beauty of the divine. There is a sense in which the nonhuman creation stands awaiting this, for from it will come a harmony of thanksgiving once humans have finally been restored. Humans and nonhumans share part of what constitutes the nature of both groups, and also, in some sense, a partaking of the divine via the human. Both groups will celebrate the return of humans to their former status once the negative effects of sin are removed. What Gregory's theology enables with regards to nonhuman animals, is not only a connection to humans, but a calling for humans to sanctify creation and draw it towards God. Such a state is enabled by the redemptive effects of the incarnation, of God taking on human nature in its fullness – including those aspects which humans share with irrational creation.

This chapter furthers the work achieved in the first chapter through demonstrating that God's rationale for the incarnation extends beyond the human (since all creation stands in need of redemption). Yet Anselm's theology, though it logically expressed the necessity of such redemption, was unable to explain how God's incarnation as a human could achieve this. In this chapter, I demonstrated once more that the rationale for God's incarnation as a human is broader than his concern with just humanity. Though Gregory shares with Anselm the view that only humans (among earthly creatures) are fallen, he also provides a means of expressing how the redemption brought about by God's incarnation can be extended to include the nonhuman. In addition, Gregory also has the beginnings of an ethical requirement for humans towards the nonhuman in light of the redemption the incarnation enables. Due to



their dual-natured connection to the rest of creation, humans are also understood as having a calling to drawing creation up to God to partake in the divine glory. To be the redeemed human creature then, means having a sanctifying role within creation. Yet though these ideas are certainly present within Gregory's writings, the details are not. How such sanctification is achieved through the human constitution is not detailed by Gregory beyond accepting that such an event occurs. Such practical matters need addressing if God's incarnation as a human is to be more fully understood with regards to the nonhuman creation. Although sin is an essential part of understanding why God became human, and the human constitution as images of God likewise contributes an important element in suggesting a calling associated with it to reflect God's goodness, these answers in and of themselves do not yet give a sufficient account of why God chose to become human in particular. Gregory's conception of the human nature as microcosm, and a corresponding calling associated with it, has good potential. These themes developed by Gregory are suggestive of a fruitful way of engaging with the question of why God became human. His work, however, leaves open questions about the microcosmic nature of humanity, and it is these which I will explore in the next chapter in the context of Maximus' thought.

## Maximus the Confessor and the Microcosmic Constitution

### Introduction

In my first chapter, I made the case for the first of my theses in which God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human to include the nonhuman. The second chapter added to this case, while also beginning to build support for the third thesis, that there is an ethical responsibility of the human towards nonhuman animals due to human nature. This chapter will not only add to the first thesis, but will also move to address the other two theses: that God's incarnation as a human is based on a particular calling by God for the human, and that there is an ethical response on the part of the human due to this calling. Of these three points, however, it is the first and third which will be primarily examined, while the second will be shown in the works of Maximus, but not fully brought to the fore until the final chapter based on the writings of Karl Barth. As in the previous chapters, the two fundamental questions are: Why did God choose to become incarnate as a human?, and what are the implications of this for understanding human/nonhuman relationships? The way Maximus' theology answers these questions illustrates how his concern in accounting for how the rest of creation is to feature. While the logic of Anselm's aesthetic cosmology seems to require a place for the nonhuman, and Gregory's theology implicitly allows for a place, Maximus explicitly *creates* a place due to the depth and range of his cosmic theology. Maximus has been widely recognized as a theologian attentive to the implications of theology for the entire cosmos.<sup>489</sup> This is not to say that he spent equal time discussing hummingbirds as he does humans; he does not. Rather, Maximus is aware of the implications his theology has for the whole of creation. This can be seen in a range of ways including his creative cosmology (involving the *logoi* and humans as microcosms), the act of mediation, as well as deification. At the centre of these lies the incarnation, which plays a pivotal role in the theology of Maximus as a whole. In each of these hugely important theological subjects, Maximus writes about the implications each has on God, humanity, and

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<sup>489</sup> Indeed, David Yeago ('Jesus of Nazareth and Cosmic Redemption: The Relevance of St. Maximus the Confessor', in *Modern Theology*, 12:2, 1996, 165.) once wrote that 'If contemporary schoolchildren knew this sort of thing [church history], every schoolchild would know two things about the theology of St. Maximus: that he was a great christologian, and that he thought profoundly about cosmic redemption.' The same idea can be seen in the various titles that have come out about Maximus: *Man and the Cosmos* (Thunberg), *The Cosmic Liturgy* (von Balthasar), *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ* (Blowers and Wilken), and 'Jesus of Nazareth and Cosmic Redemption' (Yeago). See also Doru Costache ('Going Upwards with Everything You Are: The Unifying Ladder of St Maximus the Confessor.' In *Science and Orthodoxy, a Necessary Dialogue*, edited by Basarab Nicolescu and Magda Stavinschi, 136. Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2006.) who writes that 'In a very original way, St Maximus (7th century) synthesised various earlier attempts, as recorded in the history of Christian tradition, to build a holistic system able to give account for the whole of reality.'

the whole of the created order. Given this, each has a cosmic dimension in which the creative and redemptive purposes of God are inclusive of the whole created order.

This chapter is arranged in three sections. In the first, the broader cosmology of Maximus is examined to show how Maximus presents the world and how it operates. Here, his theology of creatures more generally (via the *logoi*), humans in particular, and the current state of creaturely affairs will be addressed. I will show that all creation is of concern to God, that humans have a specific microcosmic nature and mediatorial calling (though perhaps not a unique nature, as Maximus believed), and that the whole of creation stands in need of redemption. The second section is based around the incarnation of Christ, and within it I will demonstrate that God took on human nature so that it could be restored, as could the human calling towards mediation. Such mediation implies that humans, as part of what it means to be human, have a calling towards acting on behalf of creation. Finally, the third section looks at deification, the end goal of God's creative and redemptive acts. Deification will be shown to include the whole of creation, and the connection once more will be made towards an ethical responsibility on the part of humans regarding the nonhuman creation. Through these three sections I will demonstrate that Maximus' answers to our two fundamental questions are that God became incarnate to bring about deification for the cosmos and that God's choice to become incarnate as a human in particular is based around their nature as microcosms, enabling a connection with the rest of creation, and their calling to mediate and draw all creation up to God. This mediation entails a human ethical responsibility towards the nonhuman creation. Given the questionability of the *uniqueness* of human microcosmic nature, however, though a connection to the rest of the created order is a necessary basis for the incarnation as a human, it is not a sufficient one. In the same way that sin and evil were not a sufficient answer given the fallenness of the whole of creation, neither is the human constitution as microcosm given that other creatures likely possess this constitution as well.

## **Section 1: Creative Cosmology**

### *Logoi Theology*

The first section is based around Maximus' creative cosmology, or the way Maximus understands the creative acts of God to express his wider cosmology, the implications these have for better understanding God's motivation for becoming incarnate as a human in particular, and the place of the nonhuman within the incarnation. I begin by addressing

Maximus' *logoi* theology, which he uses to give both an ontological basis and goal for those things which will be created. Here, what the *logoi* are, as well as their connection to the Logos will be examined to show how this system accounts for the nonhuman within a broader theology connected to the incarnation. Next, the movement from the divine ideas which are the *logoi* to actual created reality is discussed, with specific focus on the human creature as the image of God and microcosm. What such a microcosmic nature entails, and its link to mediation, will be discussed before I call into question claims towards human uniqueness regarding microcosmic nature. Finally, having moved from the ideas behind creation, to the reality of the created order, this section will end by exploring the impact of the Fall on creation, which will lead into the second section examining the redemptive work of God in the incarnation.

Maximus' explanation of the incarnation's necessity is grounded in his account of the relationship of the Logos to what he calls the *logoi*. This relationship is a significant one, for the centrality of the Logos in the *logoi* is the first of three ways in which Maximus understands the Word to be incarnate in creation.<sup>490</sup> Yet the concept of the *logoi* was not one that was created by Maximus. Like a number of philosophical ideas used by later Christians, it has its basis in Stoic philosophy, yet found its first Christian basis in Origen who understood the *logoi* as ideas present in Christ as Wisdom and which formed the intelligible world.<sup>491</sup> Such an understanding is also seen in early Christian writers such as Athanasius and Augustine.<sup>492</sup> For Maximus, however, the most significant influences were Evagrius and Pseudo-Denis, the second of whom introduced a more dynamic understanding of the *logoi*.<sup>493</sup> Yet Maximus did not simply accept the views of his predecessors, for he rejected an understanding of the *logoi* as identical with either the essence of God or the physical existence of things.<sup>494</sup> Instead, he took on this ancient Christian idea and developed it much further and more systematically than did his predecessors.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Thunberg, Lars. *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Open Court, 1995, 77. Maximus notes three incarnations of the Word: within the *logoi*, within Scripture, and within the person of Jesus (Tollefsen, 'The Ethical Consequences', 396. See also *Chapters on Knowledge* 2.70-76. In *Maximus the Confessor: Selected Writings*. Edited by George Berthold, 127-80. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985). While the first of these is discussed briefly here, the third is the incarnation which will be the central focus of this chapter.

<sup>491</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 73, note 157.

<sup>492</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 73, note 157.

<sup>493</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 73, note 157.

<sup>494</sup> von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 118.

<sup>495</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 73.

Such development is demonstrated in the wide range of ways in which the *logoi* have been understood within his writings: as principles of a differentiated creation,<sup>496</sup> as divine wills or intentions,<sup>497</sup> divine ideas,<sup>498</sup> divine works or intentions,<sup>499</sup> essential qualities and the purpose of creatures,<sup>500</sup> the foundations of the created cosmos,<sup>501</sup> revelatory divine principles,<sup>502</sup> the fundamental meanings of individual creatures,<sup>503</sup> and as the thoughts of God.<sup>504</sup> Despite such a range of understandings, we can be clear that the *logoi* of God play a central role in the cosmology of Maximus in two related ways which Maximus discusses most significantly within his *Ambigua*,<sup>505</sup> specifically within *Amb.* 7, 10, 41 and 42.

On the one hand, the *logoi* ‘are God’s original ideas or intentions for creation....what God intends it to be’,<sup>506</sup> and ‘define the essential qualities and purpose of creaturely being.’<sup>507</sup> Maximus makes this point clear in *Amb.* 7: ‘All created things are defined, in their essence and in their way of developing, by their own *logoi*.’<sup>508</sup> Such a basis and existence for the *logoi* is made safe by God: ‘The *logoi* of all things known by God before their creation are securely fixed in God.’<sup>509</sup> Despite the fact that the *logoi* find their basis in God, such security within God is not to deny creaturely freedom, for though Maximus states that the *logoi* exist within God as the ideas for each creation, he at the same time emphasises creaturely freedom to exist and move in opposition to God’s intentions.<sup>510</sup> The *logoi* provide information not only about understanding who each creature is made to be, but also the order of the universe as a whole: ‘Everything in the universe is separated one from another in an orderly manner in accordance with the *logoi* in which each thing consists by the ineffable One who holds and

<sup>496</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 65; Costache, ‘Going Upwards with Everything You Are’, 138.

<sup>497</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 65.

<sup>498</sup> Tollefsen, Torstein. *The Christocentric Christology of St Maximus the Confessor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 2.

<sup>499</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 170.

<sup>500</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 92.

<sup>501</sup> Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 20.

<sup>502</sup> Gibson, ‘The Beauty of the Redemption’, 51.

<sup>503</sup> Edwards, Denis. ‘Final Fulfilment: The Deification of Creation.’ *SEDOS Bulletin*, 41.7-8 (2009) 185.

<sup>504</sup> Munteanu, ‘Cosmic Liturgy’, 337.

<sup>505</sup> Hereafter, *Amb.*

<sup>506</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 92.

<sup>507</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 92.

<sup>508</sup> Maximus, *Ambiguum* 7, PG 91:1081B. In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 45-74. Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the PG.

<sup>509</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1080C. See also 1081A.

<sup>510</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 74. The related concept to the *logos* of a creature, is its mode of being, or *tropos*. The connection of these two ideas will be examined in more detail below.

protects everything in accordance with unity.<sup>511</sup> On the other hand, the *logoi* are more than an ontological basis for all that exists; they are also the intended goal for all created things: ‘Of all things that do or will substantially exist .... the *logoi*, firmly fixed, preexist in God, in accordance with which all things are and have become and abide, ever drawing near through natural motion to their purposed *logoi*.’<sup>512</sup> They include what we are and who we are made to be, and so as God’s divine intentions for each and every thing, the *logoi* are an ideal form for everything that exists, and the closer beings can be to their *logoi*, the closer they are to God’s intentions for them. As will be demonstrated, it is precisely the two related elements of what the *logoi* are (who we are, and we who we are intended to be) that play a crucial role in the motivation for the incarnation. In the incarnation God worked to free the world from sin (movements away from who we are intended to be) and to enable creaturely existence to achieve the various *logoi* which it was intended to be. Yet before this topic is addressed another important aspect, especially in regards to this chapter, is the range of particularity which is included by the *logoi*.

Within Maximus’ understanding of the *logoi* is the interesting idea of both a generality and particularity of subjects. With regards to generality, each group or type of creature belongs to a *logos*: ‘a *logos* of angels preceded their creation, a *logos* preceded the creation of each of the beings and powers that fill the upper world, a *logos* preceded the creation of human beings, a *logos* preceded everything that receives its becoming from God, and so on’.<sup>513</sup> Here Maximus describes briefly a range of different groups, each with a corresponding *logos*. Such groupings range from the most broad (e.g. universal *logoi*)<sup>514</sup> which are inclusive of all created beings, to more specific groups such as humans. *Logoi* define who each group is to be, and what is unique to them.<sup>515</sup> Yet Maximus goes even further than such groups in his particularity with regards to the *logoi*: ‘By his Word and by

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<sup>511</sup> Maximus, *Difficulty* 10, PG 91:1133C. In *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 94-154. London: Routledge, 1996. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by this author of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the PG. Louth translates *Ambigua* as *Difficulty* in this book, but I will retain the original title of *Ambigua*.

<sup>512</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 42, PG 91:1329A-B. In Sherwood, Polycarp. *The earlier Ambigua of Saint Maximus the Confessor and his refutation of Origenism*. Romae : Orbis Catholicus : Herder, 1955. See also Bahrim, ‘The Anthropocentric Cosmology of St Maximus the Confessor’, 15. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by this author of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the PG.

<sup>513</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1080A. See also *Amb.* 7, 1084B.

<sup>514</sup> See Maximus, *Amb.* 41, PG 91:1308C-D. In *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 155-62. London: Routledge, 1996. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by this author of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the PG.

<sup>515</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 94.

his Wisdom he made all things and is making all things, *universals as well as particulars*.<sup>516</sup> For each and every individual, there is a specific or particular *logos*. Thus not only is there a human *logos* and cat *logos*, but also an Erin the human *logos* and a Daphne the cat *logos*. Such specific and individual *logoi* are located within their larger groups and these larger groups within even larger ones, etc. Maximus makes his case by quoting from ‘the great and holy Denys’ within *Amb.* 41: ‘That which is many in number or potentialities is one in species, and that which is many in species is one genus, and that which is many in its processions is one in its source, and there is none of the beings that is without participation in the One.’<sup>517</sup> Based upon his reading of Denys, Maximus then clarifies and adds to it: ‘And simply, to speak concisely, the *logoi* of everything that is divided and particular are contained, as they say, by the *logoi* of what is universal and generic, and the most universal and generic *logoi* are held together by wisdom, and the *logoi* of the particulars, held fast in various ways by the generic *logoi* are contained by sagacity.’<sup>518</sup> Here Maximus outlines his understanding of the created order as residing within a hierarchy of existence, moving from individuals to increasingly inclusive groups, ending ultimately in one cosmic group entailing all that is made by God.<sup>519</sup> These various *logoi* groups are ‘God’s intentions through which all creatures receive their generic, specific, and individual essences.’<sup>520</sup> This particularity and individuation of the various *logoi* suggests that the vast differentiation seen within the created order is intended by God, and is a positive thing.<sup>521</sup> Not only is such difference within creation seen as positive, but ‘for Maximus no species properly exists as a static entity locked in itself; rather, it is marked by movement towards broader communion within a framework of progressively more inclusive *logoi* ultimately encompassed by the one divine Logos who is the source and end of creaturely existence.’<sup>522</sup> The *logoi*, which provide both ontological bases and also eschatological goals, are inclusive of each and every individual creature including those of the nonhuman creation. When Maximus discusses the existence and

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<sup>516</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1080A, italics mine.

<sup>517</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1313A.

<sup>518</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1313A-B.

<sup>519</sup> See also Tollefsen (*Christocentric Christology*, 88) who makes this point.

<sup>520</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 170.

<sup>521</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 74; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 221; Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1081B. Such a positive value of differentiation is based on God’s *logoi* and not on the differentiation which comes about through the entry of sin into the world; the distinction between a human and a cat is good, but the distinction between who God made each creature to be, and who they are as a result of sin, is not. See also *Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice*, 1.71. In *The Philokalia*, vol. 2. Compiled by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth. Translated and edited by G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, 164-284. London: faber and faber, 1981.

<sup>522</sup> McFarland, ‘Fleshing Out Christ’, 433.

redemption of creation then, the *logoi* are necessarily inclusive of the nonhuman. All creatures, both groups of creatures and individual creatures, human and nonhuman alike, necessarily exist together, and such togetherness is founded upon their shared *logoi* and through their individual *logoi*, in the Logos.

Torstein Tollefsen accurately describes the central role which the Logos and *logoi* play together in the theology of Maximus the Confessor: ‘The *logoi* belong to the Logos and this Logos/*logoi*-conception is, then, the backbone of Maximus’ worldview.’<sup>523</sup> Of this backbone, it is the Logos who holds together the *logoi* and acts as a centre, where all the *logoi* are unified.<sup>524</sup> The Logos as essential to the *logoi* is descriptive of the place of the Logos as incarnate within the various *logoi* of creation. Within his *Mystagogia*, Maximus describes how the Logos acts as the centre of a circle from which various lines (*logoi*) radiate, again demonstrating the importance of the Logos within Maximus’ *logoi* theology. Maximus gives a further two illustrations to make this point stating that the *logoi* can be understood to be birds seated on the branches of a great tree (the Logos),<sup>525</sup> while elsewhere suggesting that the *logoi* of intelligent beings may be understood as the blood of the Logos, and the *logoi* of sensible beings the body of the Logos.<sup>526</sup> These examples show the intimate link between the Logos and the *logoi* which Maximus conceives. Elsewhere Maximus goes beyond claiming the presence of both within the other, and instead claims that ‘the one Logos is many *logoi* and the many *logoi* are One [the Logos].’<sup>527</sup> What can be seen in these increasingly intimate connections drawn between by Maximus is his profound understanding of the important connection between the Logos and the *logoi*. Given that the Logos is present in each of the many *logoi*, this means that ‘the Logos expresses Himself not only in His *logos* of human individuals and the human species. He expresses Himself in the *logoi* of individuals, species and genera of animals, insects, plants, minerals, etc., as well.’<sup>528</sup> Daniel Munteanu notes how such a presence of the Logos in the *logoi* of all created beings enables a theological basis for the dignity of the world and all creatures given the actual presence of the Logos within the *logoi*.<sup>529</sup> The Logos/*logoi* conception also suggests a means of relationship

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<sup>523</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 2.

<sup>524</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 67-81, 136; Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 398; Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1080A, 1081C.

<sup>525</sup> Maximus, *Knowledge*, 2.10.

<sup>526</sup> Maximus, *Thal.* 35, from Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 76-77.

<sup>527</sup> *Amb.* 7, 1081B. Maximus pre-empts this claim (*Amb.* 7, 1081B) by stating that though the Logos is beyond words and thought, and is beyond being, nevertheless, the Logos is the many *logoi* and vice versa.

<sup>528</sup> Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 399.

<sup>529</sup> Munteanu, ‘Cosmic Liturgy’, 342.



through the common centrality of the Logos, both between God and all creatures,<sup>530</sup> as well as between creatures.<sup>531</sup> This relation is one of the three ways in which God willed to be incarnate within the cosmos (the other two being the presence of the Logos in Scripture, and in taking on flesh in the person of Jesus).<sup>532</sup> Thunberg explains that ‘in Maximus’ view, the Logos, on account of his general will to incarnate himself, holds together not only the *λόγοι* of creation but also the three aspects of creation, revelation and sanctification.’<sup>533</sup> In these various ways Maximus describes a worldview which is inclusive of the *logoi* of all creation as well as one which describes a relation between the many *logoi* and the Logos. The link between the Logos and the *logoi* also exists, as will be shown, in the pre-existent *logoi* and also in incarnation of the Logos, as well as in the goal of deification which the incarnation is aimed at. The goal of deification, alike to the presence of the Logos within the *logoi*, is cosmic in extent. The *logoi*, however, are wills, or ideas of God; it is not until the act of creation that such *logoi* begin to have a creaturely existence outside of the mind of God.

The move from the *logoi* to the formation of various creatures and creations is an important part of Maximus’ understanding of creation due to the distinction between the two. While the *logoi* are the pre-existent divine wills or thoughts, it is only in the act of creation that these become tangible, this-world items.<sup>534</sup> The movement from the *logoi* to creation entails a number of aspects which inform Maximus’ readers as to the nature of the created world, as well as the value God has for it. While the *logoi* are pre-existent ideas in God, the items they refer to are creatures relatively independent from God. Though based on the *logoi* of God, God’s creations have a comparative amount of freedom with regards to their *tropos*, or mode of being; while the *logos* of each creature is set, the way in which that existence is lived can be altered and changed.<sup>535</sup> In other words, while I have no choice over being a human, I do have some say in how I live my life. The idea of change and movement is built into what Maximus means when he speaks of a creature as compared to the Creator, who is

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<sup>530</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 80-81; Maximus, *The Church’s Mystagogy*, 1. In *Maximus the Confessor: Selected Writings*. Edited by George Berthold, 181-225. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985.

<sup>531</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 80-81; Maximus, *Mystagogia*, 1.

<sup>532</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 77; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 80; Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 21; Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 396; Maximus, *Amb.* 33, PG 91:1285c-1288a from Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 396.

<sup>533</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 77.

<sup>534</sup> Bahrim, Dragos. ‘The Anthropocentric Cosmology of St Maximus the Confessor.’ *Journal for Interdisciplinary Research on Religion and Science* 3 (2008) 14.

<sup>535</sup> See Louth, *Maximus*, 57. It is the *tropos* which is affected by the fall and so corrupted; the *logos* of the creature, made by God, cannot be. Likewise, it is the *tropos* which Christ alters for the better through his redemptive acts. More detail is provided on these topics further below.

beyond motion or change.<sup>536</sup> Such change is built in as a necessary part of the creature, for it is through motion and change that creation can reach its end goal.<sup>537</sup> Ultimately, the goal is deification, which will be examined in more detail below, but a necessary part of this goal is a creaturely participation in God.<sup>538</sup> Maximus writes: ‘God, full beyond all fullness, brought creatures into being not because He had need of anything, but so that they might participate in Him...and that He Himself might rejoice in His works, through seeing them joyful and ever filled to overflowing with His inexhaustible gifts.’<sup>539</sup> What this implies is that, in line with the view of others such as Irenaeus, what God created was good, but not complete.<sup>540</sup> Within *Amb. 7* Maximus suggests: ‘no creature has ever ceased using the inherent power that directs it towards its end ...it belongs to creatures to be moved toward that end which is without beginning...’<sup>541</sup>, and in so doing, Maximus describes how creaturely existence is one of movement towards its perfected end. God’s creative project and his actions within creation (including the incarnation) are driven towards achieving this goal. Humans have a unique place within this process due to their distinctive nature, and one such feature of this special nature is their creation in the image of God.

### *The Human Creature*

The contribution of Maximus directly on the subject of the image of God is somewhat limited in comparison to Gregory of Nyssa,<sup>542</sup> but alike to Gregory it is an important element of what defines the human and a partial reason for why God became human. Indeed, much of what Maximus writes on the image of God is similar to that of Gregory of Nyssa in a number of ways.<sup>543</sup> First, like Gregory, Maximus views the image of God as directly connected to the

<sup>536</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 50; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 88; Maximus, *Four Hundred Texts on Love*, 4.9. In *The Philokalia*, vol. 2. Compiled by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth. Translated and edited by G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, 52-113. London: faber and faber, 1981; Maximus, *Amb. 7*, 1073B.

<sup>537</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 88. Such motion is ‘natural’ insofar as it is directed towards the creaturely goal of participation in God. Other motions, such as those connected with sin, are not natural and so are not to be deemed as good. See also Boojamra, John L. ‘Original Sin According to St. Maximus the Confessor.’ *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 20.1-2 (1976) 21.

<sup>538</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 94; Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 397.

<sup>539</sup> Maximus, *Love*, 3.46.

<sup>540</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 210; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 73; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 87.

<sup>541</sup> Maximus, *Amb. 7*, 1073B.

<sup>542</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 113.

<sup>543</sup> Maximus does not generally go into great detail as to the nature of the image of God, but he does mention it in a range of his writings. These include: *Love* 2.83; 3.85; *Two Hundred Texts on Theology and the Incarnate Dispensation of the Son of God*, 1.13. In *The Philokalia*, vol. 2. Compiled by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth. Translated and edited by G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, 114-63. London: faber and faber, 1981; *Various Texts*, 1.28; *Ad Thalassium 1*, CCSG 7:47. In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by

rational soul and reason.<sup>544</sup> He writes in *Amb.* 7: ‘The rational and intellectual soul given to man is made in the image of its maker...’<sup>545</sup> Second, Maximus like Gregory makes a connection between the image of God and the capacity for freedom.<sup>546</sup> Third, both authors highlight the role that the capacity for dominion has in a proper understanding of the image of God.<sup>547</sup> This idea of dominion is directed less towards the rest of creation than it is in Gregory, and has more emphasis on the intellect ruling over the non-intelligent elements within us, just as God rules over the intelligence of humanity.<sup>548</sup> In these key ways, Maximus is quite similar to Gregory of Nyssa, though the primary way he differs is his emphasis on the distinction between the image and the likeness. Whereas Gregory viewed these as similar in meaning, Maximus does not. Instead, Maximus views the image of God as an ontological structure of humanity which humans cannot diminish or remove, while the likeness to God is a calling which humans have and is based upon the capacities inherent within the image of God (reason, freedom).<sup>549</sup> Maximus states that if humans use those capacities found in the image of God for virtue and good, they will add to the image ‘the sanctity of the divine likeness that is attained through the exercise of [their] own free will.’<sup>550</sup> Thus attaining the likeness of God is a process of sanctification which requires an active role for the human to live and work in virtue. Such work towards the likeness of God through sanctification is connected with the divine plans for deification. In *Amb.* 7, Maximus writes: ‘And through this course one becomes God, being made God by God. To the inherent goodness of the image is added the likeness (cf Gen 1:26) acquired by the practice of virtue and the exercise of free will.’<sup>551</sup> One of the very reasons why the Logos became human was to enable humans

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Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 97-98. Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, vol. 7, edited by C. Laga and C. Steel, using the citation format of the *CCSG*; *Amb.* 7, 1092B-C; *Amb.* 42, PG 91:316D, 1345D, 1316D. In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 79-96. Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by this author of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the *PG*.

<sup>544</sup> Maximus, *Love* 3.25; *Amb.* 7, 1092B; Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 115, 117; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 98.

<sup>545</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1092B. Interestingly, Maximus seems to suggest that based on the central role of reasoning capabilities, it is not just humans, but any rational creature that is an image of God. He writes in *Love* 3.25-26: ‘Every intelligent nature is in the image of God...All beings endowed with intelligence and intellect are either angelic or human.’ Thus not only humans, but also angels are images of God. Conceivably an alien race that was rational as well would be included as images of God by this reasoning.

<sup>546</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 119; Louth, *Maximus*, 60; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 120;

<sup>547</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 120.

<sup>548</sup> Maximus, *Love* 2.83.

<sup>549</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 126-7; Munteanu, ‘Cosmic Liturgy’, 338.

<sup>550</sup> Maximus, *Two Hundred Texts on Theology*, 1.13. See also *Amb.* 7, 1084A, as well as *Love* 3.25.

<sup>551</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1084A. See also as well as *Love* 3.25. The process entailed in deification is addressed in more detail below.

to add to the image of God the likeness of God, and through so doing, to achieve deification (a topic discussed in more detail below). Alike to Gregory, Maximus believes humanity to be more than the image (and likeness) of God, for humans are also crucially understood to be microcosms of creation, an idea which he makes significant use of in his answer to why God became human in particular.

### *Microcosm*

The manner in which Maximus describes the human creature is evidence of his understanding of them as microcosmic. As will be shown, this is a concept which has wide reaching effects for not only Maximus' anthropology, but also his understanding of cosmology and soteriology. Before addressing these, however, it is helpful to understand that Maximus did not conceive of these notions in isolation, but rather stands within a long tradition in which the human body/soul was seen as a key to understanding the universe, and it was this tradition which he used in creating his own unique (and more substantial) understanding of the microcosm.<sup>552</sup> As noted in the second chapter on Gregory of Nyssa, the idea of humans as a microcosm has a long history based in Greek philosophy. In addition to those influences shared by Gregory, Maximus was also influenced by the Cappadocian Fathers (most significantly by Gregory himself),<sup>553</sup> as well as Denys the Areopagite.<sup>554</sup> From such authors, Maximus drew on ideas about humans as microcosms of creation, as well as built upon their claims. Maximus discusses this idea in a number of his works, including *Epistulae* 6, *Mystagogia* 7, *Amb.* 10, and *Amb.* 41.<sup>555</sup> These texts, though each with its own direction, discuss humans as made with a basic 'dichotomy in unity'<sup>556</sup>: as both intellectual creatures (with a rational soul), and as sensible creatures (with a body). This ontological status is suggested to be uniquely human,<sup>557</sup> with a resulting reality that humans are 'related taxonomically with all created beings,'<sup>558</sup> and contain within themselves 'the elements of all creation.'<sup>559</sup> The way humans are microcosms is three-fold. First, humans possess a three-part

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<sup>552</sup> For more detailed accounts of the historical transmission of the microcosm idea up to Maximus than will be presented here, see Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 132-42.

<sup>553</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 72; Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 135-37; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 73; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 103.

<sup>554</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 72. For more on the impact of Denys the Areopagite on Maximus, see Louth, *Maximus*, 28-32.

<sup>555</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 138; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 73;

<sup>556</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 176.

<sup>557</sup> Kharlamov, Vladimir. 'Theosis in Patristic Thought.' *Theology Today*. 65 (2008) 165; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 118; Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B-C.

<sup>558</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 102.

<sup>559</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 132-33.

soul, which includes the same elements found in vegetation, animal, and angelic life. Second, as already mentioned, humans possess both a physical body and a rational soul through which they incorporate the whole of creation. Third, humans possess within themselves the five divisions that exist throughout creation, and which they are called to overcome for creation. Here one can already notice that in comparison to Gregory, Maximus has a similar yet more detailed account of humans as microcosms. In each of these ways, humans can represent creation given their creative connection to the whole of the cosmos.

Regarding the first way in which humans are microcosms, Maximus discusses not just one trichotomy of the soul, but a few, including rational, non-rational, and non-sensible;<sup>560</sup> mind, reason, sense;<sup>561</sup> and rational, irascible, and concupiscible.<sup>562</sup> Within *Amb. 10* Maximus writes: ‘The soul has three kinds of motions that converge into one: that of the mind, that of reason, and that of sense,’<sup>563</sup> and slightly further on he continues that humanity ‘received from God a soul having mind and reason and sense, so that it can range from the sensible to the intelligible.’<sup>564</sup> This trichotomy within *Amb. 10* is used to describe the three different ways God can be known: in an inexplicable transcendent way, through the use of reason, and through the use of the senses. Since humans possess all three, they can know God in each of these ways. Despite such a range of trichotomies of the soul within his writings and the potential it has for understanding humans as microcosms, the main way Maximus presents the microcosm is through the body/soul dichotomy.<sup>565</sup> Two texts illustrate Maximus’ body/soul microcosmic view of humans quite clearly. The first is found within *Mystagogia 7*: ‘The whole world, made up of visible and invisible things, is man and conversely ... man ... made up of body and soul is a world.’<sup>566</sup> The second, from *Amb. 10*, though longer, is more detailed in its description of humans as a body/soul constituting a microcosm of creation:

For the whole nature of reality is divided into the intelligible and the sensible.... The entities on each side of this division are naturally related to

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<sup>560</sup> Maximus, *Love* 3.30-31.

<sup>561</sup> Maximus, *Ambigua* 10, 1112D in *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 100. London: Routledge, 1996.

<sup>562</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thalassium* 64. In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 145-71. Crestwood: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by this author of the *Patrologica Graeca*, vol. 91, edited by J. P. Milne, using the citation format of the *PG*. For more detail on Maximus’ use of these three types and others, see Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 174-5.

<sup>563</sup> Maximus, *Amb. 10*, 1112D-1113A.

<sup>564</sup> Maximus, *Amb. 10*, 1116A.

<sup>565</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 176.

<sup>566</sup> Maximus, *Mystagogia* 7.

each other through an indissoluble power that binds them together. Manifold is the relation between intellects and what they perceive and between the senses and what they experience. Thus the human being, consist[s] of both soul and sensible body, by means of its natural relationship of belonging to each division of creation....So in its two parts it is divided between these things, and it draws these things through their own parts into itself in unity.<sup>567</sup>

In these two examples, Maximus expresses his understanding of humans as a unity of body and soul (or as sensible and intelligible) and through such a constitution to be microcosms of creation. Thunberg writes: 'It is man's double relationship to God and the intelligible world on the one hand, and his bodily relationship to the world of the senses on the other, which constitutes his microcosmic character.'<sup>568</sup> Along with his emphasis on humans as dual-natured, Maximus equally stresses that humans are dual-natured *in unity*.<sup>569</sup> The notion of such unity is seen within the text from *Amb.* 10 above, yet Maximus also notes this idea in *Mystagogia* 7 when describing how the cosmos and humans have intellectual and sensible aspects, both having a substantial identity yet both unified.<sup>570</sup> Maximus, though recognizing the distinctive nature of body and soul, suggests that neither can exist independent of the other.<sup>571</sup> Thus through the unity of body and soul, humans are a microcosm of creation which possess both sensible and intelligible natures.<sup>572</sup> The final way Maximus describes humans as a microcosm is in his understanding of humans as able to overcome five divisions within creation due to the fact that such cosmic divisions also exist uniquely within the human. Such divisions (which will be discussed in more detail below) are descriptive of the ways in which God made distinctions within creation, yet these divisions are ones that will ultimately be overcome. It is precisely because humans are microcosms that they can overcome such divisions both for themselves, as well as on behalf of all creation. It is based on this idea of unity of body and soul, and the overcoming of divisions within creation, that the human

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<sup>567</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 10, 1153A-B.

<sup>568</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 169.

<sup>569</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 176. The importance of this unity for the human within Maximus is also discussed by von Balthasar in *Cosmic Liturgy*, 235-46.

<sup>570</sup> Maximus, *Mystagogia* 7. See also *Amb.* 7 1097D.

<sup>571</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1100C-1101C.

<sup>572</sup> Though the first chapter on Gregory of Nyssa noted that Gregory described humans as a microcosm of creation, Gregory's writings are at times at odds with one another with regards to the lasting value of such a microcosmic constitution of the human. Though readings of Gregory (like the one taken in the first chapter) certainly allow for a reading which have the microcosmic nature of humans as essential to human nature, with Maximus there is no question about how essential the microcosmic nature of humanity is.

constitution of microcosm finds its active role as mediator, and with it understanding towards the motivation for the incarnation of God when humans fail in this task.

### *Issues with Claim to Human Microcosmic Uniqueness*

Thus far this chapter has described Maximus' discussion of the cosmos, both generally via the *logoi*, as well as humans specifically including their relation to the cosmos, focusing on the way Maximus understood human nature as microcosmic. Such a microcosmic nature is recognised by Maximus to be *uniquely* human. Within *Amb.* 41 for instance, after explaining various divisions which exist within creation and describing humans as a microcosm, Maximus goes on to suggest that 'For this reason the human person was introduced last among beings, as a kind of natural bond mediating between the universal poles through their proper parts.'<sup>573</sup> Thus for Maximus, even the creation narrative which ends with that of humanity, expresses the unique position of humans as microcosms within creation. Yet such a stance on human uniqueness with regards to microcosm is not as secure today as it would have been in Maximus' lifetime. For humans to be uniquely microcosmic requires that there is some feature or attribute they possess in common with God and angels, which no other earthly creature has. For Maximus this was rationality, yet as David Clough notes, 'it is clear that on any sensible definition the capacity for rational thought is a continuum across species rather than a binary division with only human beings counting as rational.'<sup>574</sup> Examples of various kinds of rationality among nonhuman species are increasingly reported by those studying animal cognition including nonhuman animal capacities which surpass those of humans.<sup>575</sup> In addition, though perhaps not as pressing as the presence of rationality among nonhuman animals, the hypothetical yet real potential for rationality among extra-terrestrials would also have significant implications for viewing humans as uniquely microcosmic – possessing both rational and irrational aspects. The existence of Spock for example, would present significant difficulties in claiming a unique human constitution as both rational and irrational. This is not to reject microcosmic theology

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<sup>573</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B.

<sup>574</sup> David Clough, *On Animals Volume I: Systematic Theology*. London: T & T Clark, 2012, 70.

<sup>575</sup> There are a wide range of examples. For tool use see Alex A. S Weir, Jackie Chappel and Alex Kacelnik, 'Shaping of Hooks in New Caledonian Crows', *Science* 297:5583 (2002); for memory tests Sana Inoue and Tetsuro Matsuzawa, 'Working Memory of Numerals in Chimpanzees', *Current Biology* 17:23 (2007); for the capacity to process grammar Louis M Herman, Stan A Kuzaj and Mark D. Holder, 'Responses to Anomalous Gestural Sequences by a Language-Trained Dolphin: Evidence for Processing of Semantic Relations and Syntactic Information', *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 122:2 (1993); and for the ability to utilise abstract concepts in performing tasks see 'Irene M. Pepperberg, *The Alex Studies: Cognitive and Communicative Abilities of Grey Parrots*, Cambridge: Harvard University, 2000.

outright, nor its significant theological attempt to provide a connection between the creature God became incarnate as, and the rest of the created cosmos. Instead, it suggests that this feature which Maximus claimed uniquely for humanity, might not exist solely in the human. Though an important theological concept, especially within the later soteriology Maximus describes, it is not necessarily a uniquely human quality.

The created human status as microcosm is directly linked with the calling to act as mediators within creation. It is not tangentially linked however, for the human calling to mediate is necessarily built upon their creation as a microcosm: ‘the microcosmic constitution of man is the pre-condition for his role as mediator.’<sup>576</sup> This connection is widely recognized by Maximus scholars,<sup>577</sup> and is found most explicitly within Maximus’ *Amb.* 41, but also in *Ad Thal.* 48 and 63.<sup>578</sup> Within *Amb.* 41, after describing creation as divided in five divisions, and made the claim of humans as microcosmic creatures, Maximus states that ‘Humanity clearly has the power of naturally uniting at the mean point of each division since it is related to the extremities of each division in its own parts.’<sup>579</sup> But what does Maximus mean by mediation? Tollefsen summarises it well in saying ‘The microcosmic being of man makes him the natural bond (σύνδεσμος) between all levels of being, and he is created just for this purpose: to actualize the created potential of his being to achieve a fully realized community between all creatures and their Creator.’<sup>580</sup> It is precisely due to their microcosmic nature, which relates them to all aspects of the cosmos that humans can mediate between the extremes.<sup>581</sup> Indeed, so significant is this role that Maximus suggests that even the creation narrative describing humans as created last is indicative of their microcosmic nature *as well as* their calling to mediate as a bond within creation.<sup>582</sup> How such mediation draws all creation together (a topic that will be addressed below), is through overcoming five divisions which Maximus understands to exist within the cosmos and humanity.<sup>583</sup> Precisely because humanity is a microcosm they contain within themselves not only the five divisions, but also the means of overcoming them, for both themselves and the whole of creation. In overcoming

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<sup>576</sup> Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 397.

<sup>577</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 132-42, 176, 231, 331; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 102, 183; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 104; Louth, *Maximus*, 73; Tollefsen, ‘The Ethical Consequences’, 396-7.

<sup>578</sup> Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80.

<sup>579</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B. The divisions of creation will be examined in more detail below.

<sup>580</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 102-3.

<sup>581</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B.

<sup>582</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B-C; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 104.

<sup>583</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41. For a detailed examination of the five divisions and the subsequent five mediations, see Thunberg’s, *Microcosm*, 331-432 and *Man and the Cosmos*, 80-91.



these divisions the human would then be ‘in the position to go on and unite the world in itself and bring it into an harmonious relationship with God.’<sup>584</sup>

### *Divisions*

As noted, Maximus understands there to be five main divisions within the created order.<sup>585</sup> Such divisions were not invented by Maximus, and indeed he introduces his discussion on them in referring to ‘the saints’ who passed on such a tradition.<sup>586</sup> Though Maximus examines the five distinctions in a number of his writings, he does so most significantly in *Amb.* 41:

They [the saints] say that the substance of everything that has come into being is divided into five divisions. The first of these divides from the uncreated nature the universal created nature, which receives its being from becoming....The second division is that in accordance with which the whole nature that receives being from creation is divided by God into that which is perceived by the mind and that perceived by the senses. The third is that in accordance with which the nature perceived by the senses is divided into heaven and earth. The fourth is that in accordance with which the earth is divided into paradise and the inhabited world, and the fifth, that in accordance with which the human person, which is the laboratory in which everything is concentrated and in itself naturally mediates between the extremities of each division, having been drawn into everything in a good and fitting way through becoming, is divided into male and female.<sup>587</sup>

Thunberg gives a clear summary of these divisions:

If we start from the top of the hierarchy they are: (1) between the created and the Uncreated; (2) within the world of created things between the intelligible and the sensible; (3) within the sensible world between heaven and earth; (4)

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<sup>584</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 140.

<sup>585</sup> For a detailed discussion on these divisions, see Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80-91.

<sup>586</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1304D. Louth (*Maximus*, 155-56) suggests a strong use of both Gregory of Nyssa and Denys the Aeropagite in this regard.

<sup>587</sup> Though *Amb.* 41 is the most detailed discussion of this, the same idea can be found in *Amb.* 10.26, and, as Thunberg notes (*Man and the Cosmos*, 80) in *Ad Thal.* 48 and 63.

on earth, between paradise and the world of men; (5) in humanity between man and woman, or the masculine and the feminine.<sup>588</sup>

What is present is a hierarchy of distinctions or divisions of being within creation beginning with the most basic (that between God and all creation) and ending with the most specific within humanity. These divisions may appear to be concerned primarily (or solely) with humanity; e.g. the division is not between male and female, but male and female within humanity. Yet due to Maximus' understanding of the human as a microcosm, the whole of the cosmos is included within the human person. In writing on the fifth division Maximus states that 'the human person ... is the laboratory in which everything is concentrated,'<sup>589</sup> and so shows the inclusion of the cosmos within his understanding of the divisions in creation. Thus the five divisions of which Maximus writes are found in both the cosmos as a whole, as well as within each human in particular, and it is precisely due to this that humans are enabled, as microcosm, to mediate on behalf of creation according to God's will.<sup>590</sup> Such divisions describe the various ways in which the created order has been made particular by God. Although they are neither sinful, nor a result of the Fall, these divisions provide an opportunity for sin, introduced through the Fall, to work in a divisive way.<sup>591</sup>

### *Fall*

Thus far, this chapter has addressed a range of elements related to the act of creation and the things which God created, with specific interest given to the nature of the human as both microcosm and image of God. Proceeding in this way allows for a fuller understanding of what was intended through the act of creation. Maximus is quite clear, however, that creation as it now stands is not the finished product God intended for the cosmos. Rather, creation is currently in an imperfect state, a state brought about primarily through the actions of humans in the beginning moments of creation, or rather, at the exact moment of creation.<sup>592</sup> Given the reality of the Fall, God's intentions for creation have been frustrated,

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<sup>588</sup> Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80. Within *Amb.* 41, these can be found in 1304D-1305B. See also Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 80-81; McFarland, 'Fleshing Out Christ', 428; Louth, *Maximus*, 72-5, 155-56; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 104.

<sup>589</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305A. The Greek word ἐργαστήριον, here translated 'laboratory', can also be translated as 'workshop', and indicates an area where work is done. The human, in Maximus' account then, is a workshop in which all the cosmic material is found, and who, as a result, can work on behalf of the cosmos.

<sup>590</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 73; Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305B. More specific detail as to how humans can mediate over these five divisions due to their nature as microcosm will be examined in further detail below.

<sup>591</sup> Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 81.

<sup>592</sup> For Maximus creation and Fall were simultaneous events. See Maximus, *Ad Thalassium* 61, CCSG 22:85 (In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 131-43. Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press,

and Maximus discusses both the causes of the Fall, as well as the implications this has for the created order, including the coming of God in the person of Christ.

In Maximus' account it is clear that the Fall is dependent upon humans' free will, and that it has as its cause both human self-love and desire for sensual things. Maximus describes the human responsibility in *Ad Thal.* 61, 22:85:

When God created human nature, he did not create sensible pleasure and pain along with it; rather, he furnished it with a certain spiritual capacity for pleasure, a pleasure whereby human beings would be able to enjoy God ineffably. But at the instant he was created, the first man, by use of his senses, squandered this spiritual capacity – the natural desire of the mind for God – on sensible things.

Though the Devil played a role,<sup>593</sup> it was ultimately by the use of human free will that humans assented to the temptation, and enabled the Fall.<sup>594</sup> The human capacity for free will allows humans to both willingly choose God, and also to choose to direct their will elsewhere.<sup>595</sup> As noted, the temptation offered was centred on the human desire for self-love (which Maximus suggests is the 'mother of passions'),<sup>596</sup> and primarily, in terms of sensible pleasure.<sup>597</sup> Based on these reasons humanity chose to follow something other than God, and their choice was the initial cause which brought about cosmic effects for the whole of creation, effects which ultimately required an act of God to correct them.

In discussing the consequences of the Fall, and the various ways humanity and creation have been affected, Maximus is clear that the negative change which has come over creation occurs at the level of how creatures act, and not what they are. Louth states this position plainly: 'The result of Fall is not that natures are distorted in themselves, but rather

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2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, vol. 22, edited by C. Laga and C. Steel, using the citation format of the CCSG); Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 181; Blowers, 'Gentiles of the Soul', 67).

<sup>593</sup> Maximus, *Letter Two: On Love*, 396D; *Ad Thal.* 61.

<sup>594</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 226.

<sup>595</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 122. Maximus has a nuanced understanding of will, and divides human will into 'natural will' and 'gnomic will'. Natural will was discussed above in regards to human nature and the image of God, for it is part of the nature of humans to be able to will using reason. Gnostic will on the other hand, is 'based on γνώμη, i.e. the *habitus* of desire which man has acquired through his use of his capacity for self-determination.' (Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 211)

<sup>596</sup> Maximus, *Love* 2, 8.

<sup>597</sup> Maximus, *Letter 2*, 396C-D; *Amb.* 10, 1156C-D; *Amb.* 42, 1348A; *Ad Thal.* 61, 22:85. See also Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 199, 377.

that natures are misused: the Fall exists at the level not of *logos* but of *tropos*.<sup>598</sup> At the heart of this idea is the understanding that nothing which God made is evil, and that all God has made was and still is good. At the level of their nature, or *logos*, every creature and creation is good and cannot be otherwise; it is only at the level of their mode of existing, or *tropos*, that creation has gone astray.<sup>599</sup> This has a number of consequences for humans and the rest of creation. Due to the Fall, all humans receive from Adam passibility, corruptibility, and mortality.<sup>600</sup> The manner in which this occurs is human procreation which was brought about through the use of sensual passion (in a way which Christ was not), and was introduced by God as a punishment.<sup>601</sup> Given such a beginning, humans (and indeed all earthly creatures) no longer move according to their nature, but instead in ways which are divided from that nature.<sup>602</sup> For humans, the result is that they are no longer able to perform their task of mediation on behalf of creation.<sup>603</sup> As a consequence, not only have the entire cosmos suffered the negative effects of sin brought about by humans, but the divine calling given to humans to mediate for creation has also been disrupted. Regarding such a cosmic state of sin, Tollefsen notes that Maximus does not seem to have explicitly considered if the current difference between *logos* and *tropos* is one which affects only intelligent creatures, or all creatures.<sup>604</sup> Despite this, there seems to be good reason for thinking that just as in other areas of Maximus' theology, there is a cosmic scope in view. Tollefsen suggests that 'Prey, hunting, killing, hostility, destruction, decay, illness, death – none of these things can reasonably be thought to belong to the original, divine scheme of the cosmic order, according to Maximus' understanding.'<sup>605</sup> This idea can be supported in Maximus' own writings, for within *Amb.* 41, he states:

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<sup>598</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 57. See also Maximus, *Opusculum* 7, 80B. In *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 180-91. London: Routledge, 1996.

<sup>599</sup> Because God created them, each created nature is good. This idea provides support for understanding how it was that God took on human nature in the incarnation. Maximus affirms that in the incarnation, Christ took on human nature in its entirety, but not did not take on sin for sin has no place in human nature. See Maximus, *Ambigua*. 5, 1048B in *In Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 172. London: Routledge, 1996; *Various Texts*, 1.11. Maximus is also claimed to make the same point in 'The Trial of Maximus', 24.

<sup>600</sup> Blowers, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 31; Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 61.

<sup>601</sup> Maximus, *Various Texts*, 1.14, 4.39; *Ad Thal.* 21, CCSG 7:127-29. In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 109-13. Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, vol. 7, edited by C. Laga and C. Steel, using the citation format of the CCSG.

<sup>602</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 132.

<sup>603</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 231; Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80; Louth, *Maximus*, 156; Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1308C-D.

<sup>604</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 133.

<sup>605</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 133.

For the wisdom and sagacity of God the Father is the Lord Jesus Christ, who holds together the universals of beings by the power of wisdom, and embraces their complementary parts by the sagacity of understanding, since by nature he is fashioner and provider of all, and through himself draws into one what is divided, and abolishes war between beings, and binds everything into peaceful friendship and undivided harmony, both what is in heaven and what is on earth, as the divine Apostle says.<sup>606</sup>

Here the ideal which God is moving creation towards (which is their *logoi*), is that of a peaceful state of existence for all beings within the cosmos – to the extent that this is not the case, the effects of sin may be understood to be working. Given such a state, it was only by an act of God that the cosmic state of sin could be dealt with.

### *Section Summary*

In this section I discussed three main points based around Maximus' presentation of God's creative cosmology. First, I demonstrated how Maximus' presentation of God's creative acts, and those things which were created, emphasise the cosmic implications for his theology. From Maximus' concept of the *logoi*, to the creation of actual beings with a focus on the human creature who is both image of God and microcosm, moving to the five divisions which exist within the cosmos and the human calling to overcome such divisions within creation, and ending with the Fall and its effects, this section demonstrates that in each of these areas, Maximus' theology has implications for the entire cosmos. The concept of the *logoi* in particular suggests that God's creative concern is not just for groups of beings (humans, dogs, angels), but also for individual creatures, to each of which belongs a pre-existent *logos*. Whereas Anselm's aesthetic theology provides a means of extending concern to the whole of creation, and Gregory of Nyssa describes how the redemption brought about by the incarnation can somehow extend to the nonhuman creation, in Maximus we find both a cosmology which highlights the importance Maximus places on the whole cosmos, as well as a means of expressing why and how the incarnation affects the whole of creation. Second, of all the various creatures which exist, by Maximus' account the human is unique in their

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<sup>606</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1313B. Likewise within *Ad Thalassium* 2, CCSG 7:51 (In *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, 99-101. Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, vol. 7, edited by C. Laga and C. Steel, using the citation format of the CCSG.) Maximus speaks of God making creation 'harmonious and self-moving in relation to one another and to the whole universe'.

microcosmic nature, which is descriptive of an inherent connection with the rest of the cosmos. The same is true of their calling, which is descriptive of their task of mediation. For Maximus, as for Anselm and Gregory, the human is unique. While I noted that Maximus' claim to a *unique* microcosmic nature for humans may be problematic, its presence enables their calling of mediation, an idea Maximus discusses in much more detail than Gregory. Such mediation is necessary not only so that God's ultimate plan for creation may be achieved, but especially since the presence of sin and fallenness has entered into the entire cosmos. Each of the *logoi* which make up the cosmos are impacted by the divisions which are found throughout creation, and it is the human being as microcosm, who was made to overcome such divisions on behalf of the whole of creation. Yet given the Fall, humans failed in their calling and thus God acted to restore humanity to their God-given capacity to mediate on behalf of the cosmos. This act was accomplished through the incarnation. Nonetheless the incarnation is not just a means to fixing what humans failed at, but was always the centre piece of God's creative process, with or without the Fall. In the next section I will describe the incarnation of the Son of God and show how, through the incarnation, God acted to restore creation to its intended course by taking on human nature in its entirety and allowing humans to fulfil their role as microcosms of creation through enabling their task of mediation. In doing so, I will show that for Maximus, God's choice to become incarnate as a human in particular was done such that humans, who are connected to the whole of the cosmos, could be restored to their calling to draw all creation up to God via mediation.

## **Section 2: Incarnation**

### *Introduction*

The incarnation of the Son of God is central to Maximus' theology as a whole as well as to his understanding of its place within God's creative project. Yet in moving beyond its role within Maximus' theology to his understanding of the incarnation within the cosmos it is clear that Maximus views the incarnation as of the utmost centrality and importance. Paul Blowers and Robert Wilken summarise his centrality of the incarnation: 'Jesus of Nazareth holds the secret to the foundations – the architectural *logoi* – of the created cosmos, its destiny after the fall of created beings (the mystery of *redemption*) and the transcendent end

(τέλος) of creation (the mystery of *deification*).<sup>607</sup> Such a statement is descriptive of the pivotal focus of the incarnation within the purposes of God. Maximus himself describes the importance of the incarnation within *Ad Thal.* 60:

This [the incarnation] is the great and hidden mystery, at once the blessed end for which all things are ordained. It is the divine purpose conceived before the beginning of created beings. In defining it we would say that this mystery is the preconceived goal for which everything exists, but which itself exists on account of nothing. With a clear view to this end, God created the essences of created beings.<sup>608</sup>

Here Maximus describes the importance the incarnation has within the creative intentions of God, acting as both the creative impetus for God, as well as the divine goal for which all creation exists. So fundamental is the incarnation to Maximus' understanding of the creative project, he suggests that even without the Fall and the issues related to sin in the world, God would have become incarnate.<sup>609</sup> Unlike Anselm's account, Maximus views the incarnation not as motivated primarily towards addressing sin, but as bringing about God's ultimate creative will for creation – deification. As shown in the quotation above, the incarnation is 'the divine purpose conceived before the beginning of created things' and 'the goal for which everything exists.' In other words, to summarise a phrase from Blowers, the world is the theatre in which the incarnational mission of God is played out.<sup>610</sup> Though the way in which the incarnation occurs is ultimately a mystery, what actually takes place is a matter of some significant importance for not just humanity, but all creation.

Given the reality of the incarnation of the Son of God as a human, the question remains as to what occurred in the event. Simply put, in the incarnation Maximus states that the infinite God became present within a single human being through taking on human nature in its entirety.<sup>611</sup> Due to the incarnation, the Logos was fully God and fully human, however,

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<sup>607</sup> Blowers, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 20. Thunberg makes a similar point in *Man and the Cosmos* (76) 'The historical Incarnation of God in Christ, the God-Man provides us with the key to the universal cosmos and to the economy of salvation as a whole.'

<sup>608</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thalassium* 60, CCSG 22:75 from *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers, and Robert Louis Wilken, Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003, 123-30. All subsequent references to this text will refer to the translation given by these authors of the *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, vol. 22, edited by C. Laga and C. Steel, using the citation format of the CCSG.

<sup>609</sup> Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, 80; Munteanu, 'Cosmic Liturgy', 339; von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*,

<sup>610</sup> Blowers, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 17.

<sup>611</sup> Maximus discusses the incarnation, and the fact of God taking on and being fully God and fully human in a wide range of his writings. The following are but a sample: Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 21, 127; *Ad Thal.* 60, 73; *Amb.* 7, 1097B; *Amb.* 10, 1165D; *Amb.* 42, 1316D; *Opusculum* 7, 73C. In *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 180-91. London: Routledge, 1996; *Various Texts*, 4.39, 4.25, 4.41, 4.56, 4.59.

this idea has a number of qualifiers. In becoming human, God retained fully the nature of both divine and human, and in so doing did not become a new type of being: ‘For Christ is not some intermediate being, affirmed by the negation of the extremities.’<sup>612</sup> Instead each nature remains wholly what it is in its own right.<sup>613</sup> Maximus is equally clear that ‘In the mystery of the divine incarnation the distinction between the two natures, divine and human, in Christ does not imply that He is divided into two persons.’<sup>614</sup> Christ is a single person, fully divine and fully human together, yet undivided.<sup>615</sup> An important part of what it meant for Maximus to describe God taking on humanity was not only that it was the entirety of human nature which was taken on, but also that this human nature was utterly free of human sin.<sup>616</sup> Yet at the same time, it was not a perfected humanity utterly different from all other humans; instead the human nature which the Logos took up was one which shared the same weakness to sin. Maximus explains: ‘Taking on the original condition of Adam as he was in the very beginning, he was sinless but not incorruptible, and he assumed, from the procreative process introduced into human nature as a consequence of sin, only the liability to passions, not the sin itself.’<sup>617</sup> Thus Maximus, in line with Anselm and Gregory, understands Christ to contain all the same aspects of humanity which every other human possesses, including our potential for sin; yet this is a potential which Christ never actualises.

The Logos fully took on human nature, and in so doing, enabled a new way for humans to exist. This process has been described by Maximus scholars in a variety of related ways. In the incarnation God ‘restored human nature to its original function’,<sup>618</sup> the incarnation is ‘the origin of humanity’s return’,<sup>619</sup> it ‘pioneers a new modality’,<sup>620</sup> and ‘enables humans to reorientate themselves.’<sup>621</sup> Such descriptions match well with the ways in

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<sup>612</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 5, 1056 D.

<sup>613</sup> Maximus gives the illustration (*Amb.* 5, 1060A) of a sword plunged into fire, whereby the heated sword is both sword and heat combined into one, yet sword and fire (or heat) are still distinct even in the event.

<sup>614</sup> Maximus, *Various Texts*, 4.56.

<sup>615</sup> Maximus is well known for going into much more detail than this in his description of Christ as both human and divine. In particular, his defense of the idea that Jesus had both a divine will and a human will, in contrast to the monothelite controversy that arose during his lifetime. In addition, Maximus also distinguished between the natural will and the gnostic will within *Opusculum 3* (In *Maximus the Confessor*. Edited by Andrew Louth, 192–96. London: Routledge, 1996), the first being freely willing that which we are intended to, the second is a result of the Fall and is instead a ‘process of formulating an intention’ (Louth, *Maximus*, 59). While all humans, due to the Fall have both a natural and a gnostic will, Christ has only natural wills (both divine and human) as he is not fallen and does not need to deliberate on what to will.

<sup>616</sup> Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 152; Maximus, *Various Texts*, 4.39; Maximus, *Amb.* 42, 1316D; Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 21, 127, 129.

<sup>617</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 21, 129. See also *Amb.* 42, 1316D–1317B.

<sup>618</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 82.

<sup>619</sup> Gibson, ‘The Beauty of the Redemption’, 52.

<sup>620</sup> Bowers, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 35.

<sup>621</sup> Louth, *Maximus*, 74.



which Maximus portrays the restorative effects of the incarnation for humanity.<sup>622</sup> Across a range of his writings, Maximus describes the restorative function of the incarnation for humans. He notes that in the incarnation God is ‘restoring humanity’s means of existing to its true *logos*,’<sup>623</sup> and that by the incarnation, ‘human nature would recover the good inheritance it had in the beginning,’<sup>624</sup> and would also ‘stop [human nature] being divided and having no rest due to lacking purpose and will.’<sup>625</sup> Each of these claims a restorative nature to the incarnation for humanity, a restoration to what they were in the beginning. The incarnation is more than a restoration to human nature as it was in the beginning, for it also includes what humans were made to become. This process will be dealt with in more detail in the third section, but a significant part of God becoming human is based around the mirror notion of humans becoming gods. Maximus writes that the ‘Logos... became son of man and man so that He might make men gods and the sons of God’,<sup>626</sup> and that ‘He becomes truly man so that by grace He may make us gods.’<sup>627</sup> Perhaps the clearest expression of this, which also provides reason for Maximus’ consistent position of God fully taking on the whole of human nature, is found in *Various Texts on Theology*, 1.62 where the incarnation ‘makes man god to the same degree as God Himself became man.’ Such a process of divinisation, though rooted in humanity, is by no means limited to humans. The very process of restoring human nature entails a restoration of all the elements of what it means to be human, and a significant part of that, as noted above, is the human as a microcosm. As Tollefsen notes, the Logos, ‘who is the center of all the *logoi*, assumed human nature, and, by assuming it, He assumed the microcosm He had created as a link between all created beings.’<sup>628</sup> It is precisely this connection between the microcosmic human and the divinising acts of God in performing the tasks of mediation given to humanity that enables the divinisation of not just humanity, but all creation.

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<sup>622</sup> Anselm, though he does discuss the impact which sin has on the ontology of humans (e.g. their mortality is not by nature, but due to sin – *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.11), primarily discusses the impact which sin has had on the relation between humans and God, as well as the impact sin has had on the beauty of God’s creation. The restorative works of God are primarily described regarding how such an act impacts this relationship and the beauty of God’s creation. Maximus is more akin to Gregory, who describes the impact of sin on not only the relation between humans and God, but also repeatedly writes on the impact which sin has on the constitution of the human (e.g. it tarnishes their capacity to mirror God). Indeed, for Gregory, the two are connected; the human is the creature made to mirror God, and to the degree that they cannot, they are not living in relation to God as they are intended to.

<sup>623</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 42, 1317D.

<sup>624</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 61, 22:87.

<sup>625</sup> Maximus, *Various Texts*, 1.47.

<sup>626</sup> Maximus, *Two Hundred Texts on Theology*, 2.25.

<sup>627</sup> Maximus, *Various Texts*, 1.62. See also *Ad Thal.* 61, 22:91.

<sup>628</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 103.

### *Restorative Effects of Incarnation*

Tollefsen states that ‘It is no coincidence that God the Logos, in His Incarnation, assumed human nature, since precisely this nature was designed to be the starting point of the actualization of the divine purpose,’<sup>629</sup> and there seems every reason to concur with such a view. As detailed above, Maximus felt that among all of God’s creations, humans alone exist as a microcosm of the cosmos, representing the whole of the created order. This status, though never destroyed by human sin, is complicated by it such that humans can no longer use their microcosmic status to fulfil their calling towards the mediation of creation to achieve cosmic divinisation. Maximus is explicit that one of the reasons for the incarnation is the ‘instituting afresh’ of human microcosmic nature:

Since then the human person is not moved naturally... but contrary to nature... and since it has abused the natural power of uniting what is divided, that was given to it at its generation, so as to separate what is united, therefore “natures have been instituted afresh”, and in a paradoxical way beyond nature that which is completely unmoved by nature is moved immovably around that which by nature is moved, and God becomes a human being, in order to save lost humanity.’<sup>630</sup>

The Logos did not merely act at a distance so as to enable us to wholly be who we were made to be (our individual *logos*), but instead shared in our humanity. Precisely by being ‘in accordance with our nature, everything that we are and lacking nothing,’<sup>631</sup> Christ became the microcosm which humans are, and through so doing, completed the role given to them. Or, put another way, by ‘restoring humanity’s means of existing to its true *logos*,’<sup>632</sup> God was restoring humans to not only their created natures as microcosms, but enabling their calling as mediators of creation.

As we have seen, the process of mediation holds a central place within Maximus’ soteriology and cosmology, for through it God brings about his purposes within creation. Maximus writes that because humans have failed in their task of ‘uniting what is divided’, the Logos became human and in doing so:

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<sup>629</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 103.

<sup>630</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1308C-D.

<sup>631</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1308D-1309A.

<sup>632</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 42, 1320A.

Through Himself He has, in accordance with nature, united the fragments of the universal nature of the all, manifesting the universal *logoi* that have come forth for the particulars, by which the union of the divided naturally comes about, and thus He fulfils the great purpose of God the Father, to recapitulate everything both in heaven and earth in Himself, in whom everything has been created.<sup>633</sup>

Here, Maximus' focus on the cosmic extent of God's redemptive will is made quite clear. Yet Maximus is even more explicit about the microcosmic role of human nature that Christ takes up in the incarnation which enables such a cosmic impact:

With us and through us he encompasses the whole creation through its intermediaries and the extremities through their own parts. He binds about himself each with the other, tightly and indissolubly, paradise and the inhabited world, heaven and earth, things sensible and things intelligible, since he possesses like us sense and soul and mind...Thus he divinely recapitulates the universe in himself, showing that the whole creation exists as one...<sup>634</sup>

Thus in and through the very natures of creation, God fulfilled 'the great purpose of God', mediated for everything in creation, and drew it all into himself. This process of mediation, however, is a multi-staged one which has a number of important aspects. The means by which Christ mediates enables the way humans can mediate. I will briefly note the various mediations before detailing the second mediation due to its particular implications for understanding the human relation to the nonhuman creation.

### *Mediations*<sup>635</sup>

As mentioned above, the calling for humans to act as mediators is predicated on the existence of five divisions or distinctions existing within creation. As the microcosmic creature, such divisions are found both within creation as a whole, as well as within the human creature. To review, these are distinctions between (1) male and female, (2) paradise and the inhabited world, (3) heaven and earth, (4) intelligible and sensible, and (5) created

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<sup>633</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1308C-D.

<sup>634</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1312A.

<sup>635</sup> This chapter is focused on the calling of mediation as it relates to the human constitution as microcosm, and due to limited space, will not go into detail regarding the connections the mediations have with Maximus' understanding of spiritual progression – a movement including the *vita practica*, *vita contemplativa*, and *unio mystica*. For a substantial and detailed discussion of these, see Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 332-73.

and Uncreated.<sup>636</sup> As humans increase in sanctification through becoming more in line with God's will, they make possible not only their own deification, but the deification of the cosmos. This is enabled because Christ, having become fully human and so microcosmic, has already overcome each of the divisions. Though each division and corresponding mediation is worthy of examination,<sup>637</sup> I will focus on the second mediation in particular for it is in this one that the ethical responsibility of the human toward the nonhuman is most apparent.

The second mediation is that between paradise and the world we inhabit and here 'paradise' has an earthly meaning rather than a heavenly one.<sup>638</sup> Paradise is not a place or location, but rather a state of existence in line with our *logoi* on earth.<sup>639</sup> This mediation occurs in two stages. First, Christ 'sanctified the world by his own humanly-fitting way of life,' and then based on this he 'opened a clear way into paradise after his death.'<sup>640</sup> Maximus bases these on the words which Christ spoke to the thief on the cross, promising to be with him in paradise (Luke 23:43), as well as Christ's presence with the disciples following his resurrection.<sup>641</sup> In these ways, Maximus suggests the division between paradise and the world we live in has been overcome by Christ. With regards to the rest of humanity, humans can now understand their own *logos* and live 'a way of life proper and fitting to Saints' thereby uniting the inhabited world and paradise to make one earth which is no longer experienced as divided.<sup>642</sup> What this entails is quite practically focused. Though Maximus did not go into significant detail, Cristian-Sebastian Sonea describes what such a life that is proper and fitting to the saints might entail:

Through the theological mission, this mediation is translated through man's possibility of transforming the environment where he lives [into] what it really is: paradise. This paradise will not be a transcendental one, as we often project, but a paradise that will not be separated from the terrestrial reality.

This mediation presupposes that man accomplishes the paradisiacal harmony.

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<sup>636</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1304D-1305B. Such divisions, and the role of God and humanity in mediating these are primarily addressed by Maximus within *Amb.* 41, but to a more limited degree are also found in *Mystagogia* 5-7. Through *Amb.* 41 Maximus begins by describing the divisions, then describes how humans are to mediate these divisions, and finally how Christ overcame these.

<sup>637</sup> For a detailed examination of the five mediations, see Thunberg's, *Microcosm*, 373-432 and *Man and the Cosmos*, 80-91.

<sup>638</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 382. Maximus himself makes this clear in *Amb.* 41, 1305A when he states that this mediation is on in 'which the earth is divided into paradise and the inhabited world.'

<sup>639</sup> Sonea, 'Man's Mission as Mediator for the Entire World', 186; Costache, 'Going Upwards with Everything You Are', 142.

<sup>640</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1309B.

<sup>641</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1309B.

<sup>642</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 41, 1305D.

This means that the relationships between man and the other creations must be similar to the ones that Adam had before the Fall.<sup>643</sup>

In line with Maximus describing Christ sanctifying the world, here Sonea describes the extent that this mediation entails, for as humans become more aware of their own *logoi* and become increasingly sanctified, this has direct implications for the nonhuman realm as well. For Maximus, part of human sanctification entails assisting in the sanctification of the world, enabling all creation to reach their divinely willed *logoi*. Christ makes possible a way of existence in which humans can overcome the earthly divisions between paradise and the inhabited world through their actions; just as Christ overcame through his ‘way of life’, humans are now enabled to do so.<sup>644</sup>

### *Section Summary*

This section highlighted Maximus’ theology of the incarnation and the centrality of the incarnation for a range of Maximus’ significant theological topics (the *logoi*, redemption, and deification) was noted. In the incarnation, Christ fully took on human nature so that humans could have both their microcosmic constitution redeemed, and their divine calling re-enabled. This calling of mediation was then detailed and the second mediation was noted for the implications it has for understanding how humans are to realise their relation to the rest of the nonhuman creation as one of enabling the nonhuman creation to reach their *logoi*. Through these various topics, we found partial answers to the questions driving this chapter. First, God’s incarnation as a human was shown to be motivated by their constitution as a microcosm. God fully took on human nature, and this included their microcosmic nature. Second, regarding the implications which this has for human/nonhuman relationships, I discussed how humans (as microcosm) are directly connected to the rest of creation, and as a result, have a divine calling which entails a responsibility to act on behalf of the nonhuman creation. In these ways Maximus’ theology offers more than either Anselm’s (which recognised a need for cosmic redemption, yet failed to account for how this might occur) or Gregory’s (which lacked the depth of explaining how the microcosmic constitution of humanity extends the incarnational redemption to the rest of creation, and how this might require a human response). Yet there is more to Maximus’ discussion on these ideas than has been reviewed so far. The ultimate goal of the incarnation, and indeed the whole goal of

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<sup>643</sup> Sonea, ‘Man’s Mission as Mediator’, 186-87. The word ‘into’ was added where the original had ‘in’.

<sup>644</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 382.

creation itself, is deification. In Maximus' discussions on deification we find not only a central importance of the incarnation, but also a cosmic scope of God's deifying will, as well as deeper implications for how humans, as part of the human nature and calling, are to act towards the nonhuman creation.

### **Section 3: Deification**

#### *Introduction*

This final section explores Maximus' understanding of deification, and the means by which it is brought about, as well as the implications this has for humans as well as the whole of the cosmos. Deification is the end goal of all God's actions, and as such, the central goal of the incarnation.<sup>645</sup> Maximus' answer to why the incarnation took place therefore, is deification.<sup>646</sup> God's choice to become incarnate as a human in particular is related to the role of the human in bringing this end goal about. In this section Maximus' account of deification will be examined to show not only the centrality of the incarnation for Maximus, but also to illustrate the significant role of the human creature in bringing this end result about, a result which includes the whole of creation. Throughout, a number of ideas already addressed will be re-examined in brief due to the holistic way in which Maximus' theology of deification crosses over multiple theological topics, including the incarnation, the act of mediation, and the extension of deification to include the whole of the cosmos via human nature as microcosm. The connection of deification with each of these topics will be addressed and the final emphasis of this chapter on the cosmic extent of Maximus' theological project as a whole, as well as the ethical implications which these have, will be highlighted.

Deification plays a central role within Maximus' theology of the incarnation and the human calling to mediation, as well as his theology of creation more generally. Given potential hesitations towards the concept of deification, a clear understanding of what

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<sup>645</sup> Bahrim, 'The Anthropic Cosmology of St Maximus the Confessor', 15.

<sup>646</sup> Due to my focus on the incarnation, and the rationale through which God became incarnate as a human, I do not detail in any great amount what such redemption looks like eschatologically for each of my chosen theologians. Here I detail it due to the fact that it has impacts within his account of the incarnation, the human calling of mediation, the ethical implications of this, as well as demonstrating how God's redemptive concerns are cosmic in extent. For an examination of Barth on the topic of deification, see Bruce McCormack's essay 'Participation in God, Yes; Deification, No: Two Modern Protestant Responses to an Ancient Question.' In *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008, 235-60; and Neder, Adam. *Participation in Christ: An Entry Into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009, 12-15, 65-69.

Maximus means by deification is essential. This is no simple task for Maximus engages with a wide range of ideas in his various discussions of deification. Despite this, there are a number of repeated concepts which make up the core of his understanding. To begin with, though Maximus uses the term ‘deification’ and describes various ways in which humans become deified, he is quite explicit that deification is never about changing creaturely nature into divine nature, ‘For nothing at all changes its nature by being deified.’<sup>647</sup> Instead of humans becoming something wholly other than themselves, they instead become wholly what they were intended to be – they achieve their *logoi*. Maximus writes that one ‘becomes a “portion of God” insofar as he exists through the *logos* of his being which is in God.’<sup>648</sup> As noted above, the *logoi* of all creatures act as not only a basis for their existence, but also as a goal towards which they are driven – and this goal is deification.<sup>649</sup> Through the grace of God, creatures are enabled to become who they were intended to be, and a significant aspect of this in relation to deification, is participation in God.<sup>650</sup> Here creatures are deified by God so that they can ‘participate in the very things that are most characteristic of his goodness.’<sup>651</sup> It is the whole creature, body and soul, which participates.<sup>652</sup> As participation, deification is not a static reality; deification for Maximus is never a finished state and ‘we never cease to experience deification by grace.’<sup>653</sup> In addition, rather than suggesting a dissolving of the self into the divine and so becoming divine, Maximus holds onto the idea of independent existence for each creature and for creaturely differentiation even within deification.<sup>654</sup> This is in part expressed by his additional understanding that deification is not a ‘one-size fits all’ situation – the penetration of God in creatures, and their participation in the divine are proportionate to the created nature of the creature.<sup>655</sup> Thus, though deification is becoming fully what the creature was made to be, most significantly through participation in God, each

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<sup>647</sup> Maximus, *Opus* 7, 81D.

<sup>648</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1084B.

<sup>649</sup> For Maximus, deification is not only the individual goals of each *logoi*, but is the goal of creation. Within Maximus’ own writings, the idea of divinisation as a driving purpose within God’s creative and redemptive acts is repeatedly found, for example *Various Texts*, 1.42; *Commentary on the Our Father*, 1. In *Maximus the Confessor: Selected Writings*. Edited by George Berthold, 99-125. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985; *Amb.* 7, 1097C. For recognition of this in secondary literature, see Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 430; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 10; Cooper, *The Body in St Maximus*, 84, 114; and Louth, *Maximus*, 34.

<sup>650</sup> The idea of participation in God is found throughout *Amb.* 7 (1076D, 1080C, 1092B, 1097C) as well as in *Love* (3.25, 3.46) and *Texts on Theology* (2.88; 4.25, 4.53).

<sup>651</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1097C.

<sup>652</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1088C; *Various Texts*, 2.88.

<sup>653</sup> Maximus, *Various Texts*, 1.88. See also Blowers and Wilken (*On the Cosmic Mystery*, 42) where they describe deification as ‘an ever-moving repose in God.’ See also Blowers, Paul M. ‘Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Concept of Perpetual Progress.’ *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992) 154-55.

<sup>654</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1092C; Gibson, ‘The Beauty of the Redemption of the World’, 68.

<sup>655</sup> *Love*, 3.27; *Various Texts*, 4.53; *Amb.* 7, 1076C; and *Ad Thal.* 22, 7:141.

creature is different and will experience deification somewhat differently; deification for a human will mean something different than it will for a horse. With this brief summation, we can now examine some of the significant implications which deification has for Maximus' theology of the incarnation, the microcosmic nature of humans, and their role within the deification of the entire cosmos.

Given the importance of both deification and the incarnation within the theology of Maximus, it is not surprising that Maximus understands there to be a significant link between them. Indeed Maximus occasionally suggests that the incarnation acts as a basis for deification; that through the act of the incarnation God enables the divinisation of creation.<sup>656</sup> Within *Ad Thal.* 61 Maximus writes 'He restored [human] nature again, renewing the habitudes of human nature by his own deprivations in the flesh and granting to human nature through his own incarnation the super-natural grace of deification',<sup>657</sup> and within *Commentary on the Our Father*, that God's mysterious incarnation occurred with a view to our deification.<sup>658</sup> Thunberg sums this up in claiming that 'for Maximus the doctrinal basis of man's deification is clearly to be found in the hypostatic unity between the divine and human nature in Christ.'<sup>659</sup> Thus it is Christ's human nature being deified through its participation in the divine nature that enables the rest of humanity to also be deified.<sup>660</sup> Yet beyond claiming that the incarnation acts as a basis for deification, Maximus speaks of a 'blessed inversion' (καλὴ ἀντιστροφή), where humans are enabled to become gods to the extent that God became human. Within *Amb.* 7 Maximus writes:

By his gracious condescension God became man and is called man for the sake of man and by exchanging his condition for ours revealed the power that elevates man to God through his love for God and brings God down to man because of his love for man. By this blessed inversion, man is made God by divinization, and God is made man by hominization.'<sup>661</sup>

Within *Amb.* 10 a similar idea is found: 'God and man are paradigms of one another, that as much as God is humanized to man through love for mankind, so much is man able to be

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<sup>656</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 430, 433; Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 216-18; Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 20.

<sup>657</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 61, 22:91.

<sup>658</sup> Maximus, *Commentary on the Our Father*, 1.

<sup>659</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 430.

<sup>660</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 216.

<sup>661</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 7, 1084C.



deified to God through love.<sup>662</sup> What these writings show is an understanding of deification which suggests not only the basis of divinisation within the incarnation, but that the extent to which humans are deified is based upon the extent to which God was made human.<sup>663</sup> Thus in fully taking on the whole of human nature (as shown above), Christ enables humanity to become divine. Such a process is not automatic however, and it is through the process of mediation that humans are enabled to become divine, and through so doing, allow the whole of creation to share in such divinisation.

Just as Maximus' theology connects deification with the incarnation, so too does it connect deification with mediation. Thunberg recognises that Maximus' understanding of humanity's role as mediator is 'part and parcel' of his theology of deification;<sup>664</sup> indeed he suggests that 'human mediation is fulfilled in deification.'<sup>665</sup> The logic of such a claim is not hard to find for it is through mediation that deification is brought about via the incarnation. As noted above, it is precisely because Christ overcame the five divisions that humans (with God's grace) are now enabled to. In following after Christ and overcoming each division, humans move forward in the process of sanctification towards deification. Yet it is through overcoming the fifth division in particular that deification is enabled by God, for the fifth division is that between Uncreated and created. As Thunberg states:

We should notice here that the fifth mediation thus implies a full realization of the human consequences of the hypostatic union in Christ. God and man are not only no longer separated and divided but are united without confusion or change, and their union also implies a true communication and inter-penetration, so that Christ brings man into heaven, and man enters entirely into God.<sup>666</sup>

Through overcoming the fifth division within creation, God mediated on behalf of creation such that the division between Uncreated and created, between God and the whole of

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<sup>662</sup> Maximus, *Amb.* 10, 1113B.

<sup>663</sup> Thunberg (*Microcosm*, 32, 431) suggests that there is a further element to this idea, whereby not only do humans become God to the extent that God becomes human, but equally, that God becomes human to the extent that humanity becomes divine. While Thunberg bases this primarily on the incarnation of Jesus (where Jesus' humanity is made divine at the same time as his divinity is made human), the text in which he claims support (*Amb.* 10, 1113B) seems to mention only one direction of causality – divine to human which enables human to divine. For further support of the single direction (divine to human enabling human to divine), see Maximus, *Two Hundred Texts on Theology*, 1.62.

<sup>664</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 132.

<sup>665</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 427.

<sup>666</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm*, 406.

creation, is overcome and deification can now occur. Maximus' understanding of deification, the incarnation, and mediation, however, is that they are not simply for the benefit of humanity, but are cosmic in focus.

Given the strong connections between the incarnation (which acts as the central force of deification) and mediation (the means by which deification is brought about), it is not surprising to find that in addition to Maximus' cosmically focused theology in regards to the incarnation and mediation, he also uses this framework with deification. In his theology of cosmic deification we see Maximus' answers to both of the driving questions of this thesis. For the first, God became incarnate to bring about deification, and became human in particular to enable mediation through their microcosmic nature over the whole cosmos such that deification could become a cosmic reality. Thus both the microcosmic structure of the human, and the incarnation of God, play a crucial role in bringing about Maximus' view of the goal towards which creation is intended – the deification of the entire cosmos. This goal has been widely recognised by Maximus scholars. Tollefsen states that 'glorification and deification [is] the divine purpose for the whole created world,'<sup>667</sup> while Blowers and Wilken suggest that redemption and deification of the world is the divine plan which God had in mind before the beginning of time.<sup>668</sup> Such claims are not based on vague interpretations, for Maximus himself repeatedly stated that God's redemptive purposes went well beyond the human.<sup>669</sup> Though Maximus writes on cosmic deification elsewhere, some of his clearest expressions of the importance of a deification for the cosmos come from *Various Texts on Theology*. Within 1.42, Maximus asserts that 'It is through deification that all things are reconstituted and achieve their permanence, and it is for its [deification's] sake that what is not is brought into being and given existence.' Here Maximus expresses his understanding of the central purpose of deification within creation, for it is for this purpose that everything is given existence. Maximus acknowledges the full scope of deification even more clearly in 4.19, when he states that 'Deification, briefly, is the encompassing and fulfilment of all times and ages, and of all that exists in either.' Here again, the extent of the deification is truly cosmic in scope entailing every thing, and every age, such that all things can reach fulfilment in their divinely given *logoi*. As these examples show, Maximus' view of the redemptive

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<sup>667</sup> Tollefsen, *Christocentric Christology*, 216.

<sup>668</sup> Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 34. See also Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery*, 100 footnote 4; Kharlamov, 'Theosis in Patristic Thought', 165; Gibson, 'The Beauty of the Redemption', 53.

<sup>669</sup> Maximus, *Ad Thal.* 2, 7:51; *Various Texts*, 1.42, 4.19; *Amb.* 41, 1308D, 1312A.

purposes of God is inclusive of the whole of the cosmos. When the incarnation, the microcosmic nature of humanity, and the scope of deification are viewed together, they each reinforce the idea that for Maximus, God's creative and redemptive purposes within creation are truly cosmic.

### *Ethical Implications*

The logic of Maximus' theology as I presented it goes as follows: God willed to create the world such that the whole cosmos would be enabled to reach its various divinely ordained *logoi*, or, put another way, to be deified. It is for this purpose that God became incarnate. Yet God also willed to bring about such deification in and through the created order by using one particular creature, the human. This creature was made as a microcosm, enabling a connection to the rest of the created order. This microcosmic nature allowed humans to mediate within creation and to overcome the divisions that existed between creatures and their Creator. Of all of God's creatures, humans are the ones God willed to mediate on behalf of creation such that creation may finally attain its varied *logoi*. To enable this, God became a human creature within the incarnation. This, briefly, is the logic of Maximus' theology with regards to the incarnation and its goals, and it is here that we find the answer to the second driving question regarding the implications which Maximus' theology has for human and nonhuman relations. The logic described above carries with it certain ethical responses on the part of the human towards the nonhuman creation. This is demonstrated in a couple of ways. First, as has been made abundantly clear, Maximus' theology claims that God cares for all that He has made, and wills to redeem all that has been created. Every creature with a *logos* is of redemptive concern to God. Naturally this should have implications for how humans are to treat their fellow creatures for God values them enough to both make and redeem them. Second, a far more practical reason can be found in how Maximus presents the human and their calling. As the microcosmic creature, humans are called to mediate on behalf of the whole of creation, to enable all creation to reach its divinely given *logoi*. The human task of sanctification is one which necessarily involves aiding in the sanctification of the rest of creation, such that they reach their God-given goals. These goals, as noted above, are ones of peace between creatures,<sup>670</sup> where all creatures are deified. This is true not only for groups of creatures, but also for individual creatures, as

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<sup>670</sup> As a refresher, the reference was from Maximus, *Amb. 41*, 1313B, where Maximus writes that 'God through himself draws into one what is divided, and abolishes war between beings, and binds everything into a peaceful friendship and undivided harmony, both what is in heaven and what is on earth.' See also section above on the second mediation.

every single creature is intended for sanctification. Insofar as humans fail to work towards living at peace with other creatures, and instead treat them as mere objects for human use and exploitation, Maximus' theology would suggest humans are failing in their calling to mediate, and so failing at being human.

### *Section Summary*

This final section examined the role deification played within Maximus' theology, with special detail given to the nature of deification, how it occurs, and what the implications are for both human and nonhuman creation. Ultimately, deification is the reason why the incarnation took place. It becomes even more evident through Maximus' descriptions of why God became human in particular: to make use of the microcosmic constitution to re-enable their divine calling to mediation. As the second section detailed, humans have a role to play in deification, and it is through their nature that the cosmos as a whole are enabled to become deified. Though deification is not the same for every creature, every creature will be deified. Rather than understanding deification as the creature becoming the Creator, Maximus insists it is instead the creature becoming their divinely given *logos*. By overcoming the fifth division, Christ enables participation in God. Within this section I demonstrated that the way in which Maximus presents deification has significant implications for how humans are to understand their relation to the rest of creation. Since deification is God's goal for every single creature, and it is through the human creature that God enables deification, humans have a responsibility *as part of their very nature and calling* to work towards sanctifying creation such that it can reach its varied *logoi*.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I addressed a range of topics from the writings of Maximus the Confessor focused around the cosmic scope of his theology, and suggested that such a cosmic extent even includes individual nonhuman animals. These topics included God and the divine creative cosmology including humans as microcosms, the incarnation, mediation, and deification. I demonstrated that the incarnate God plays a central role within such a theology not only in that the Logos who becomes human is the foundation of the *logoi* which precede the existence of everything, but the very goal toward which creation is directed, deification, is based upon the incarnation. Likewise the means by which such deification comes about, mediation, is predicated on the incarnate God having first overcome the five divisions within

creation. In addition to the incarnation, the microcosmic nature of humans plays a vital role within the theology of Maximus. Given their unique microcosmic nature, humans are the only creature which, by nature, is related to all other creatures, heavenly and earthly. Similarly, because of their microcosmic nature, humans are also the only creature in which the five divisions found throughout creation are present. It is because of this unique nature that humans are the creatures through which mediation occurs, and deification is brought about. Such deification, keeping with the cosmic reach of Maximus' theologies in regards to the incarnation and mediation, occurs for every creature in the cosmos that has ever (and will ever) exist. This theme in Maximus' thought supports my first thesis; that God's rationale for the incarnation extends beyond the human.

Such an unambiguous inclusion of nonhuman animals within Maximus' theology is revealed in two distinct ways. On the one hand, Maximus' creative cosmology, founded on the *logoi*, is the most explicit place where nonhuman animals can be placed. Maximus discusses not only *logoi* of groups (the *logos* of humans and angels and dogs), but also the existence of individual *logoi* for each and every individual creature. These *logoi* are located within the Logos, and so are eternally secure yet they are not merely ideas for creation, but also goals for which God created each and every being, human and nonhuman alike. This leads to the next way in which Maximus' theology makes space for the nonhuman; in the redemptive acts of the incarnation. Through becoming human, the Logos took on the one creaturely nature which was a microcosm of creation, was related to all creation, and was called to act as a natural bond for the cosmos. Humans, as microcosms were to mediate on behalf of creation, and through so doing, to enable all creation to reach deification – to achieve all their various *logoi*. In taking on humanity in the fullest sense, Christ lived out the human calling as microcosm and mediator, and enabled humans to do the same. Thus within the incarnation God took on humanity and via their microcosmic nature, took on their relation to the whole of creation. In going through the five mediations, Christ made possible the deification of not only humanity, but the whole of creation as well.

By progressing through the material in this way, and answering the questions regarding why God chose to become incarnate, and why He became a human being in particular, the following contributions to the overall thesis argument were made. First, I demonstrated once more that God's motivation for becoming incarnate (deification) extends beyond the human to include the nonhuman creation. God wanted to enable all creatures to reach their varied *logoi* and so to become deified. Second, the ethical implications of the

human calling to mediation, based upon the human nature as microcosm were highlighted. Given their microcosmic nature (though perhaps not a unique nature as noted above) and their calling by God to mediate, a significant part of what it means to be human is to enable the rest of creation to reach their divinely-given *logoi*. Quite simply this means that humans are not free to treat the nonhuman creation in any way they see fit, but have a relationship to the nonhuman creation that necessitates their care for them. As humans progress in overcoming the divisions within creation and within themselves, they will be increasingly aware of the *logoi* of all things and so be called to enable the rest of creation to attain their goals. This means living in peaceful relation with the rest of nonhuman animals, and not using them for human-only ends.

Third, this chapter also noted the way in which the human nature as microcosm led to their calling to act as mediators within creation. Such mediation on behalf of creation offers a foundation for understanding the second main argument of this thesis, that God's choice to become incarnate as a human is based on their calling to act as representatives. Though Maximus did not overtly discuss humans as representatives of creation in the same ways as will be described in the next chapter, the idea of humans having a calling by God to act on behalf of creation, within creation, suggests such a role. The logic of Maximus' theology places an understandable order on the microcosmic nature of humans, which then enables their task of mediation. Given the questionable claim towards human uniqueness regarding the microcosmic nature of humans as shown above, however, means that the answer to why God became human in particular is not fully answered. If another creature could be considered as microcosmic, then the reason for why God became human in particular still needs to be addressed. This issue is addressed in the final chapter, when the work of Karl Barth is examined and the answer to why God became human in particular – seen in the human calling towards representation – will be put forward.

## **Chapter 4: Barth and the Representative Covenantal Partnership**

### **Introduction**

In seeking an answer to why God became human in the incarnation, I have addressed three different responses. In the first chapter, I examined the topic of sin and evil and highlighted that although this was a significant motivation for God's incarnation, it did not sufficiently answer why God became human in particular, since all creation stands in need of redemption. In the second chapter, the image of God was examined, and one aspect in particular, the microcosmic nature of humanity, was shown to be particularly significant. As Gregory of Nyssa did not address this idea in sufficient detail, this led to a more detailed account of the microcosmic nature of humanity in the third chapter based on Maximus the Confessor's writings. Here I suggested that although the idea of humans as microcosmic creatures is a useful concept, especially within a broader theology such as Maximus', the claim to the microcosmic nature of humans as unique is questionable, as is the use of this concept as the basis for God's specific choice to become human in the incarnation. In this fourth and final chapter, an answer to the question regarding God's choice of human nature in the incarnation will be sought in Karl Barth's account of God's covenant. The argument of this chapter has three key points. First, that God wills to include the whole cosmos in the covenant. Second, that this universal inclusion occurs through the representational role which humanity has, and third, that given such a representational calling, humans also have an ethical responsibility towards the nonhuman creation. These three points will be expressed by asking and answering two questions which are fundamental to this dissertation: why did God become incarnate – which is answered in the covenant, and why did God become human in particular – which is answered in their representational calling, with its subsequent ethical responsibility towards the nonhuman creation.

This chapter will demonstrate that Barth is a fruitful and interesting theological resource for understanding why God became human in particular within the incarnation. I will describe how Barth answers the questions regarding why the incarnation took place, and why as a human in particular, and will show that his account is one which is able to give a much more definitive answer than those surveyed in the previous chapters. In moving through Barth's account I will be defending his broader theological account of the covenant as the basis of the incarnation against those who claim this explanation fails to take nonhuman creatures into account. Instead, I argue that his theology of the covenant is quite

capable of providing space for nonhuman animals and is inclusive of them, though in a way that is different from that of humans. At the same time however, I recognise areas where Barth's theology fails with regards to nonhuman animals, in particular his theology of ethics and sanctification. Each of these perspectives needs adjusting in light of Barth's covenantal theology, where the representational calling of humans is of significant consequence for the nonhuman. In regards to Barth's theology of sanctification, I will use the theology of Maximus the Confessor as described in Chapter 3, to suggest a way of adjusting Barth's theology of sanctification such that it is more in line with his broader covenantal theological project. Once these revisions of Barth's theology are done, what remains is an interesting account of the nature of the human which is a constructive and significant resource for rendering an account of why God became human within the incarnation, and the ethical implications this has for humans.

In the first section I will make the case for the first of my three driving arguments of this dissertation: that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human. This idea was shown in the preceding chapters, each in a way that depended on the theology of the person examined. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how Barth's covenantal theology makes the case that God's motivation for the incarnation – to enact the covenant – is not solely focused on the inclusion of humans within the covenant, but also of nonhuman animals. Though nonhuman animals will not be shown to be covenant partners as humans are, they are nonetheless included in the covenantal promises by being covenant attendants. The section begins by showing the centrality of the covenant within Barth's theology, and detailing what the covenant is. This enables a greater understanding of what God is seeking to achieve in the incarnation. Next, how this covenant is expressed in the covenantal history will be examined, including the reality of human sinfulness and the fallenness which impacts the whole of creation. This will show how nonhuman animals stand in need of redemption just as humans do, such that God's covenantal plans for creation can be achieved. Finally, the members of the covenant will be studied to differentiate between the covenant partners (God, Jesus, and humans) and covenant attendants (nonhuman animals), and show how it is that nonhuman creatures have a place within the covenant. Here I will defend Barth's theology against those who suggest that such a differentiation implies that nonhuman animals have no place within the covenant.



## Section 1: Covenantal Theology

The concept of the covenant plays a significant and central role in the theology of Karl Barth. This is reflected throughout a number of the sections that make up the *Church Dogmatics*, as well as *Dogmatics in Outline*. Barth describes such centrality in a number of ways. On the one hand, the covenant is the goal of creation, and is described by Barth in this way repeatedly within II/2,<sup>671</sup> III/1,<sup>672</sup> and *Dogmatics in Outline*.<sup>673</sup> For example, in III/1 Barth writes that ‘The history of this covenant is as much the goal of creation as creation is itself the beginning of this history.’<sup>674</sup> As the goal of God’s creative acts, the centrality of the covenant is made quite clear. Yet Barth goes further and suggests a centrality not based just on the end, but also based on the beginning, or rather, before the beginning. The covenant is described as a ‘primal history’ which underlies creation,<sup>675</sup> it is creation’s ‘indispensable basis and presupposition’,<sup>676</sup> and is ‘the event which God willed from eternity.’<sup>677</sup> Thus not only is the covenant understood as having a forward-directed focus as the goal of creation, it also acts as the basis of creation itself. Connected with this is the idea that the covenant is not simply something which was added later following creation, an idea Barth is very clear about.<sup>678</sup> Yet Barth is even more specific, for these two broader claims are directed towards ‘creation’ more generally. Barth also explicitly states that the covenant also plays a significant role for creatures: ‘even the creature does not merely exist, but does so as the sphere and object of the covenant, as the being to whom God has devoted His good-will and whom He has destined to share in the overflowing of His own fulness of life and love. To be a creature means to be determined to this end, to be affirmed, elected and accepted by God.’<sup>679</sup> Thus as both goal and basis, and for the creative project as a whole, as well as for creatures more specifically, the covenant is a central and formative concept for the way Barth’s theology operates. Given such a centrality, it is vital to understand Barth’s concept of covenant.

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<sup>671</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume II, Part 2.1*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by G.W. Bromiley et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958, 8-9.

<sup>672</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 1*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by J.W. Edwards, O. Bussey, and Harold Knight. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958, 42, 44, 97, 231.

<sup>673</sup> Barth, Karl. *Dogmatics in Outline*. Translated by G. T. Thomson. London: SCM Press, 1949, 59.

<sup>674</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 42.

<sup>675</sup> Barth, *CD*, II/2.1.1, 8-9.

<sup>676</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 44.

<sup>677</sup> Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, 69.

<sup>678</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 231.

<sup>679</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 363-364; III/4, 39-40.

The various elements which make up the broader concept of the covenant for Barth can be separated into four categories: God's attitude and will towards creation, the relation God wills to occur between God and creation, the basis and goal of creation, and finally and most significantly, each of these as found and expressed in the person of Jesus Christ.

The first of these, God's attitude and will towards creation, is expressed in two main ways. First, Barth is clear that 'the inner basis of the covenant is simply the free love of God,'<sup>680</sup> and that God 'elects another as the object of His love. He draws it upwards to Himself, so as never again to be without it, but to be who He is in covenant with it.'<sup>681</sup> Here Barth details not just the basis of the covenant in the love of God, but also its connection to election. The covenant and God's will to elect are closely tied in the theology of Barth: 'God elects that He shall be the covenant-God. He does so in order not to be alone in His divine glory, but to let heaven and earth, and between them man, be the witnesses of His glory.'<sup>682</sup> The 'other' referenced above is Jesus Christ, and quite often Barth describes God's election to covenant as based upon the person of Christ: 'He [Jesus] was the election of God's grace as directed towards man. He was the election of God's covenant with man.'<sup>683</sup> At the very heart of the covenant is the fact that God is a God of love, who elects to become the covenant God. This idea is further exemplified by Barth's consistent understanding that the covenant is one of grace on the part of God towards creation and he repeatedly refers to the covenant as a 'covenant of grace'.<sup>684</sup> Barth summarises such an idea well within II/2: 'The fact that God makes this movement, the institution of the covenant, the primal decision "in Jesus Christ," which is the basis and goal of all His works – that is grace.'<sup>685</sup> The covenant is therefore based upon God's love and grace to and for creation.<sup>686</sup> Such love and grace however is directed towards a purpose, and that purpose, and the purpose of the covenant, is a relationship between God and creation.

At its heart, the covenant is a movement by the Creator towards the creation, a movement directed towards relation. Barth notes in IV/1 that 'covenant, *berith*, διαθήκη, is the Old Testament term for the basic relationship between the God of Israel and His

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<sup>680</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 97.

<sup>681</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1.1, 10.

<sup>682</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1.1, 11. See also II/2.1.1, 11, 14, 102, 163; *Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 3*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960, 271.

<sup>683</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1.1, 102.

<sup>684</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 43-44, 60, 178, 219; III/3, 45, 60, 347; *CD* IV/1, 23, 27, 39.

<sup>685</sup> Barth, *CD*, II/2.1.1, 9.

<sup>686</sup> See also Mangina, Joseph. *Karl Barth: Theologian of Christian Witness*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, 116-30.

people.<sup>687</sup> J.L. Scott notes that the covenant and all it entails is lived out in the biblical ‘promise “I will be your God” and the command, “Ye shall be my people”,’ an idea which is found within the writings of Barth in both IV/1 and IV/2.<sup>688</sup> While the goal and basis of creation is the covenant, the goal of the covenant is ‘The fellowship of the creature with God actualised in the person of man.’<sup>689</sup> Though how this relationship works out will be examined in much greater detail below, it is worth noting while getting to grips with the importance of the relationship, that this relationship ultimately begins in a very much one-sided way. The covenantal relationship begins and is upheld by the will of God, regardless of the human (and creation’s) participation in it.<sup>690</sup> This is a relationship that ultimately began and was upheld by God and God alone. This is illustrated in such biblical covenantal narratives as the Noahic covenant where God is the active partner in the covenant, and humanity and the rest of creation are the passive recipients.<sup>691</sup> Yet this is not where it ends. Barth goes on to suggest that ‘The covenant – God Himself will make it so – will then be one which is mutually kept, and to that extent a *foedus διπλευρον* [bi-lateral agreement].’<sup>692</sup> Such a positive active role for creatures within the covenant is ultimately the goal and aim which is foretold in the biblical claim that God will be our God, and we shall be His people.<sup>693</sup> Yet until such a time, until humans can become the full covenant partner they were intended to be (by the grace of God), God keeps the covenant safe, and ensures that there will be no dissolution of it.

Another important element of the covenant is its close connection to creation and reconciliation. As noted above, the covenant acts as the internal basis of creation, just as creation acts as the external basis of the covenant.<sup>694</sup> Thus nothing within creation, and even the very decision of God to create, cannot be truly understood apart from the covenant. Yet though the covenant is the basis of creation, it also acts as the basis of reconciliation, which

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<sup>687</sup> Barth, *CD*, IV/1, 22.

<sup>688</sup> Scott, J. L. ‘The Covenant in the Theology of Karl Barth.’ *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 17, (1964) 184. See also 190-92. These verses from both the Old Testament and New Testament are also brought up by Barth in his discussion of the covenant, especially within IV/1 and IV/2 where he discusses the redemption God brings about through Christ (IV/1, 47, 67) and the following realities of justification and sanctification (Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics, Volume IV, Part 2*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1958, 499).

<sup>689</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 45.

<sup>690</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 25.

<sup>691</sup> See Gen. 9.1-17.

<sup>692</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 33.

<sup>693</sup> This is a repeated biblical claim, and can be found in such verses as Ex. 6.7; Lev. 26.12; Jer. 30.22; and Ezek. 36.28.

<sup>694</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 231; III/3, 6-7; McDonald, Suzanne. *Re-Imaging Election: Divine Election as Representing God to Others and Others to God*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2010, 49.

Barth understands to be the fulfilment of the covenant.<sup>695</sup> Barth makes clear that the covenant presupposes reconciliation, and that reconciliation is itself the fulfilment of the covenant. Two important connected points are relevant here. The first is that the covenant cannot be understood outside of the history of creation and reconciliation in which it takes place.<sup>696</sup> Further on in IV/3 Barth clarifies that the covenant is not a static thing, but something which can only be understood as it is found in its realisation: ‘Life, covenant and reconciliation all “are” as they take place.’<sup>697</sup> The second related point is that for all the centrality which Barth places upon the covenant, and its importance in motivating creation and reconciliation, the realisation of the covenant in reconciliation is not to be understood as an end: ‘like creation, it is not an end but a beginning – complete in itself and as such, but still a beginning. It is not, therefore, an end in itself.’<sup>698</sup> Thus the realisation of the covenant, the movement of God towards creation and creation’s ultimately achieved movement to the Creator is not where the history ends, but is much more the beginning of a new and greater history. How such an eschatological history comes about, and who is included in it, are questions which will be driving this chapter. Yet before turning to these larger questions, there is one more significant element which still requires addressing before a useful understanding of the covenant can be achieved, and that is in the central role which the person of Jesus Christ has to play in the covenant.

In the person of Christ, all the elements of the covenant discussed so far find their basis, meaning, and expression. The reason for this is that Christ is the heart of the covenant and its related elements. This is demonstrated in the variety of ways in which Barth speaks of the relation of Christ to election and the covenant. With regards to the act of creation, God ‘created the universe in Jesus Christ. That is, Jesus Christ was the meaning and purpose of His creation of the universe. The latter was only the external basis, as it were, to make the covenant of grace technically possible.’<sup>699</sup> Jesus, however, is also more than the means and purpose of creation; Jesus is also ‘the atonement as the fulfillment of the covenant.’<sup>700</sup> It is through Christ that God acts to redeem creation and fulfil the covenant.<sup>701</sup> Thus in both

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<sup>695</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 67. See also *Church Dogmatics, Volume IV, Part 3.1*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961, 70.

<sup>696</sup> Barth, *CD IV/3*, 2.

<sup>697</sup> Barth, *CD IV/3.1*, 165.

<sup>698</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 109.

<sup>699</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 4*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by A.T. Mackay et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961, 39-40.

<sup>700</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 122.

<sup>701</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 36.

creation and reconciliation, Christ plays the most central role. Yet as noted above, there is more to the covenant than creation and reconciliation, and that is the relation which God wills to have with creation. The relationship which God wills to have with humanity, and through them, creation, is itself rooted in the life and acts of Christ. Barth writes that

It [reconciliation] consists in the fact that He causes the promise and command of the covenant: “I will be your God and ye shall be my people,” to become historical event in the person of Jesus Christ. It consists, therefore, in the fact that God keeps faith in time with Himself and with man, with all men in this one man.<sup>702</sup>

The way in which this occurs is based upon the fact that Jesus Christ is both God and human: ‘For it is the event – we speak of Jesus Christ – in which the covenant between God and man is sealed on both sides, in which peace is established both from above and from below, and in which the justification and sanctification of man are both accomplished.’<sup>703</sup> The covenant is ‘sealed on both sides’ because of the dual nature of Christ through which Christ is both ‘the electing God and elected man in one person.’<sup>704</sup> So significant is the person and life of Christ that Barth sums up his understanding with the following claim: ‘life, covenant and reconciliation are only material descriptions of the being, work and activity of Jesus Christ.’<sup>705</sup>

### *Sin and Reconciliation*

The topic of sin was already addressed in the first chapter of this thesis as it relates to a motivation for the incarnation. Though the conclusions will be quite similar, here the focus is on its place within the covenantal history and the impact sin has had on it. For Barth, as for most Christian theologians, sin does not logically follow from God’s creative plans and intentions.<sup>706</sup> Rather than being an aspect of God’s will for creation, sin exists as the exact opposite of this and is ‘that which God did not will and does not will and never will will.’<sup>707</sup> Given God’s driving covenantal will towards creation, ‘Sin is therefore not merely an evil, but a breach of the covenant which as such contradicts God and stands under His

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<sup>702</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 67.

<sup>703</sup> Barth, *CD IV/3*, 8.

<sup>704</sup> Barth, *CD IV/3*, 69.

<sup>705</sup> Barth, *CD IV/3*, 165.

<sup>706</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 46, 80.

<sup>707</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 46.

contradiction.<sup>708</sup> Indeed, as Barth notes, the function of the covenant which God establishes is to safeguard humanity against sin.<sup>709</sup> Sin is a reality within the covenantal history which is acting against the covenantal desires of God. Yet God is not prepared to allow sin to overcome His will and so acts salvifically ‘because He cannot tolerate that His covenant should be broken, because He wills to uphold and fulfill it even though it is broken.’<sup>710</sup> The implication of God’s strong desire to see the covenant through, is that even though sinful humans have broken the covenant, they are still bound to the covenant because God is not willing that it should be otherwise. Barth writes that ‘Even in the face of man’s transgression He cannot allow it to be destroyed. He does not permit that that which He willed as Creator – the inner meaning and purpose and basis of the creation – should be perverted or arrested by the transgression of man.’<sup>711</sup> Sin therefore, though it is entirely contrary to the covenant of God, is unable to thwart God’s covenantal desires.

Given the focus of this thesis on the place of the nonhuman, it is useful to understand where Barth views the nonhuman creation and the nonhuman animal with regards to sin and fallenness. Barth seems to be of two minds, though one is inevitably stronger. Alike to Anselm, Barth is opposed to speaking of earthly creatures other than humans as sinful, and suggests that ‘It is of a piece of the particularity of human being that the problem of godlessness and therefore of sin seems to arise only in the sphere of man.’<sup>712</sup> Barth does make clear that this is merely a ‘best guess’, and that since we do not know how nonhuman creatures are with God, we cannot categorically deny sin in their lives.<sup>713</sup> Barth even goes so far to claim that the Bible does not declare a cosmic Fall.<sup>714</sup> Yet such an assertion is explicitly contrary to his other claims regarding the fallenness of the whole of the cosmos. These claims have two main points. The first is that the whole of creation, humans and nonhumans included, are fallen and stand in need of redemption. Barth writes that humans are ‘lost and ruined with the cosmos,’<sup>715</sup> that ‘Men suffer ... in a world which suffers with them,’<sup>716</sup> that

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<sup>708</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 140.

<sup>709</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 80.

<sup>710</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 36.

<sup>711</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 36.

<sup>712</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume III, Part 2*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by Harold Knight et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960, 139.

<sup>713</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 139. For a detailed account of various ways in which the theologies of Barth and Anselm agree or differ with regards to the atonement, see Jones, Paul Dafydd. ‘Barth and Anselm: God, Christ and the Atonement.’ *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12.3 (2010) 257-82.

<sup>714</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 139.

<sup>715</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 4.

<sup>716</sup> Barth, Karl. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Translated by Edwyn Hoskyns. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933, 306.

the realm which needs redeeming is ‘God’s creation, fallen out of its union with Him ... the world of men, and of time, and of things – our world,’<sup>717</sup> and that the ‘bondage of corruption’ spoken of in Romans 8 is one which ‘encompasses all living creatures, from the microbe to the Ichthyosaurus to the most distinguished professor of Theology.’<sup>718</sup> Thus all creation exists in a state contrary to God’s will for it, and stands in need of redeeming.<sup>719</sup> The second main point which Barth’s theology makes clear is that such corruption and bondage which exists throughout the whole of the cosmos is ultimately due to humanity. Barth writes that the world ‘becomes a corrupted world by reason of man’s sin, falling under the divine curse and being enveloped in darkness.’<sup>720</sup> The reason for Barth’s apparent contrary claims (that only humans are sinful and fallen, and that all creation is fallen), is likely due to his desire to distinguish sin from the broader category of fallenness. This second category seems to include experiences like suffering, corruption, and wretchedness, and ultimately appears to be summed up in the phrase a ‘contradiction in creaturely life.’<sup>721</sup> Fallenness for Barth seems to match well with the way Maximus conceived of a failure for creatures to match their varied *logoi*; when they are living in ways contrary to God’s will for them. While fallenness is a cosmic state, sin is a human-only (among earthly creatures) state of existence. Barth’s desire to distinguish human from nonhuman in both the areas of sin and elsewhere, may be the cause of Barth’s overly strong phrase seemingly rejecting a fallenness of creation, the opposite of which as shown, is an idea he repeatedly supports elsewhere in his writings. At the very least, the place of human sin and its resulting negative effects within creation are contrary to the covenant which God seeks. This is a useful recognition for it ensures a more thorough explanation of the biblical account of sin and fallenness (contrary to the account as noted in Anselm’s theology), which then gives motivation for addressing such a state in the redemption God works to achieve. Fallen creation is a part of the covenantal history, and it is a part which the covenant, and Jesus’ incarnation, works to address and resolve.

Given that sin stands in contradiction to God’s covenant, and God is not willing to see His covenant fail, God acts to bring reconciliation to the fallen creation. Such salvation is the

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<sup>717</sup> Barth, *Romans*, 29.

<sup>718</sup> Barth, *Romans*, 308.

<sup>719</sup> Regarding creaturely existence, Barth (*CD*, III/1, 376) writes that ‘God created man to lift him in His own Son into fellowship with Himself. This is the positive meaning of human existence and all existence. But this elevation presupposes a wretchedness of human and all existence which His own Son will share and bear.’ A few pages later (*CD*, III/1, 380) Barth writes about the ‘the contradiction in creaturely life’ which Christ wills to take up and endure. See also McDonald, *Re-Imaging Election*, 173.

<sup>720</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/3, 138.

<sup>721</sup> Barth, *CD*, III/1, 380.

free act of God based on the character and will of God.<sup>722</sup> Just as Anselm suggested a logical link between God the Creator and God the Redeemer (because God has made something, so He wills to redeem it), so too does Barth.<sup>723</sup> Thus instead of having a presupposition in the fact of sin, reconciliation and redemption have their presupposition in creation.<sup>724</sup> As highlighted above, the connection between creation and covenant is significant in the theology of Barth, and this is no less true with regards to the place of reconciliation. Reconciliation is where ‘God contends one-sidedly for His work in creation and the covenant and therefore one-sidedly against sin.’<sup>725</sup> Barth’s definition of reconciliation shows its strong connection to the covenant:

Reconciliation is the restitution, the resumption of a fellowship that once existed but was then threatened by dissolution. It is the maintaining, restoring and upholding of that fellowship in the face of an element which disturbs and disrupts and breaks it. It is the realisation of the original purpose which underlay and controlled it in defiance and by the removal of this obstruction.<sup>726</sup>

Elsewhere Barth is repeatedly adamant that ‘reconciliation is the fulfillment of the covenant.’<sup>727</sup> What these repeated quotations from Barth show is the central place which reconciliation has within Barth’s broader theology of the covenant. God was not willing that his covenant should fail and so acted to restore the fellowship that was in danger from sin. And just as Barth’s theology of sin and especially its effects beyond the human include the nonhuman animal, so too does Barth’s theology of the redemptive act of God in Jesus. In Jesus, God acts ‘to save us and all creation,’<sup>728</sup> and ‘Jesus is the executive and revelatory spearhead of the will of God fulfilled on behalf of creation.’<sup>729</sup> Elsewhere Barth describes the purpose of Jesus, and how this purpose is cosmically inclusive:

He, Jesus Christ, is the man whose existence was necessary for the perfecting of the earth; for the redemption of its aridity, barrenness and death; for the meaningful fulfilment of its God-given hope; and especially for the realisation of

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<sup>722</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 80.

<sup>723</sup> Barth, *CD*, IV/3, 138. For a detailed account of various ways in which the theologies of Barth and Anselm agree or differ with regards to the atonement, see Jones, ‘Barth and Anselm’, 257-82.

<sup>724</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 42.

<sup>725</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 80.

<sup>726</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 42.

<sup>727</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 42. See also *CD* IV/1, 3, 67; IV/3.1, 3.

<sup>728</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 144.

<sup>729</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 144.



the hope of Israel ... He is the man whose confidence and hope was God alone but really God; who is what He is for all, for all Israel, all humanity, and even the whole world.<sup>730</sup>

Here Barth repeats the extent of God's reconciling act in the person of Jesus a number of times, and in doing so extends the scope sequentially, including all Israel, all humanity, and even all creation. Though Barth naturally focuses most of his discussion on the reconciliation of humanity, the fact that God's reconciliatory concerns are inclusive of all creation is a point he makes very clear, in line with Gregory and Maximus and with the logical correction of Anselm's theology. This understanding of the cosmic scope of reconciliation is not only helpful in presenting an account of what occurs to nonhuman creatures, but is also the logical consequence of the covenantal theology which connects creation and reconciliation for those included in the covenant. The full extent of God's redemptive concerns, and therefore his covenantal concerns, extend to include nonhuman animals, once more illustrating the primary argument of this section. Yet the manner in which nonhuman animals are included, and are differentiated from humans, still needs to be addressed. Doing so will show not just *that* nonhuman animals have a place within Barth's covenantal theology, but *how* they are best understood to exist within the covenant.

### *Covenant Partners*

Thus far this chapter described the nature of the covenant, its centrality within God's creative project, as well as the covenantal history through which it is brought about, including the entry of sin into the world, and the act of God to redeem his fallen creation. Such covenantal theology is useful in explaining why God created, and why God wills to redeem the fallen creation. Each of these aspects of the covenant is crucial for understanding both what it is and how it operates, and also highlights certain aspects which have implications for understanding the place of nonhuman animals within a covenantal theology. Yet there still remains one significant topic with regards to covenantal theology which has yet to be addressed, and that is who the covenantal partners are. As will be described below, being a covenant partner is not the same as being a creature which is an attendant to the covenant – a creature which benefits from the covenant, yet has a more passive role to play than a partner.

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<sup>730</sup> Barth *CD* II/2.1.1, 239. See also Barth *CD* IV/3, 217, where God's act of salvation takes place 'for the whole world and for all men.'

Who the partners are, and what role a partner needs to have in distinction from a covenant attendant is the focus of this next portion.

It nearly goes without saying that with regards to covenant partners, God is the partner who is the most significant. The reason why is two-fold. On the one hand it is God who 'elects that He shall be the covenant-God. He does so in order not to be alone in His divine glory, but to let heaven and earth, and between them man, be the witness of His glory.'<sup>731</sup> The covenant only exists because first and foremost God willed to be a covenant partner. Even here, there is no need for God to create another partner, for Barth is quite clear that God is 'partner' apart from any other creature: 'God was always a Partner. The Father was the Partner of the Son, and the Son of the Father.'<sup>732</sup> Yet God was willing to elect others as partners, and to be who God is in covenant with them.<sup>733</sup> Here we see the second main point, that the only basis any other creature has for being a partner of God, is that God willed to make them one. As God does so, however, as God enters into covenant with the human partner, the covenant is one which at least initially, is not a two-sided agreement but a one-sided decree by God.<sup>734</sup> It is only because 'God the Creator wanted to make and did in fact make Himself the covenant partner of man and man the covenant partner of God,'<sup>735</sup> that the covenantal relationship exists at all. God's involvement in the covenant however, is even more elaborate than willing to both be a covenant partner and to have another as covenant partner. God, in the person of Jesus Christ who is fully both God and human, becomes the elected covenant partner of God for humanity such that their partnership would not fail and the covenant would be fulfilled.

God is the founder and sustainer of the covenant. Yet beyond willing for there to be a covenant, and willing to be a covenant partner, God also enables humanity to become and remain a partner by Himself becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is singular because:

in Him it came about that God concerned Himself in the world and man, and in so doing He turned upon the world and man the fullness of all blessing. It is in

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<sup>731</sup> Barth, *CD II/2.1.1*, 11.

<sup>732</sup> Barth, *CD IV/2*, 344. See also *CD IV/1*, 405 and Barth, Karl. 'The Humanity of God.' In *The Humanity of God*. London: Collins, 1967, 47.

<sup>733</sup> Paul Dafydd Jones (*The Humanity of Christ: Christology in Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*. London: T&T Clark, 2008, 83) writes that 'God commits eternally and irrevocably to be the companion of humankind in, through, and as Christ, even before creation itself comes into existence.'

<sup>734</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 25.

<sup>735</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 35.

relation to Him, in and with His election as Mediate, that the world and man are created. It is as the Son and Word of God became flesh, man, creature, that God pledges and covenants Himself to the world, and at the heart of the world to man, accepting solidarity with him and accomplishing his deliverance, and direction upon him His own eternal glory.<sup>736</sup>

As both fully God and fully human, Jesus is God's movement towards the creation by which humanity is enabled to become partakers of the covenant God has willed. The topic of the second section of this chapter, representation, demonstrates how this is possible, however a few quick points can be made here with specific reference to Christ as *the* covenant partner. Barth is clear that with regards to the covenant, and to election to the covenant, it is first and foremost Jesus who is the elect and the covenant partner, and only through Jesus, humanity. Barth writes that 'If we listen to what Scripture says concerning man, then at the point where our attention and thoughts are allowed to rest there is revealed an elect man, *the* elect man, and united in Him and represented by Him an elect people.'<sup>737</sup> The covenant includes beings other than God only insofar as they are found to be represented by Christ who is 'the true Covenant-partner of God.'<sup>738</sup> Jesus stands at the centre of the covenant, a partner to God, and a partner to humans,<sup>739</sup> through whom the covenant is made real. Thus as God incarnate, Jesus makes possible the covenant which God has willed to exist between God and, through Christ, humanity.

Humans then, are also covenant partners. Barth makes this idea abundantly clear within *Church Dogmatics* as a whole, as well as within III and IV in particular. Quite simply, 'Man is, as he is created by God for God, this creature of God for covenant-partnership with God.'<sup>740</sup> Yet such a recognition of a human position as covenant partner carries with it a number of other important ideas. The first is that from the very beginning, indeed before the beginning, humans were predestined for covenant partnership with God: 'In virtue of its being and nature, the [human] creature is destined, prepared and equipped to be a partner of this covenant.'<sup>741</sup> Humans were made to be the covenant partner whom God desired. So strong is this desire by God for the covenant made with humans that he suggests they cannot

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<sup>736</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 271.

<sup>737</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1.1, 58.

<sup>738</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/2, 527. See also *CD* II/2.1, 7; III/3, 271; IV/1, 12-13, 101; IV/2, 527. In IV/1, 170, Barth also states that in Christ we see 'God is now not only the electing Creator, but the elect creature.'

<sup>739</sup> Barth, 'The Humanity of God', 43.

<sup>740</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 243.

<sup>741</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 97. See also III/1, 43, 185.

make it fail.<sup>742</sup> Though humans have failed as the covenant partner, God was not willing that the covenant should fail, nor that humans would ultimately fail as covenant partners. Connected with these two ideas is the fact that the human partnership is ultimately based entirely upon God and His will that it be humans who are the covenant partners. As they stand on their own (if they were even able to do that) humans would be utterly unable to be covenant partners:

We must be clear what we mean even when we speak of being capable of entering into covenant. We do not ask concerning an ability on the part of man to take up the relationship to God in covenant with Him, to be His covenant-partner. His creaturely essence has no power to do this. He can do it only as God makes him His partner, as He calls him to take up this relationship, as he exists as the one who is summoned to do so.<sup>743</sup>

Barth does away with the idea that because humans are ‘special’ in some way (having a unique capacity or attribute which others lack), God chose to covenant with them. Any special capacities or abilities which humans may have compared to creatures regarding the capacity to covenant are entirely based on God’s will for them to be the covenant partner, and not the other way around.

With humanity, God’s will for a covenant partner is fulfilled. A number of times Barth raises the issue that it is humans alone who have been called to this covenantal relationship. Within III/2 Barth writes that ‘Man and not angels is the partner in the covenant of grace which is the whole basis and aim of creation. The Word of God is not addressed to angels but to man.’<sup>744</sup> Later on in III/2 Barth continues this idea and states that:

Man is the one creature which God in creating calls to free personal responsibility before Him, and thus treats as a self, a free being. Among all creatures he is the one with which God, in giving it being, also concluded His covenant – the covenant of the free Creator with a free creature, so that man’s being bears irrefutably the character of a partner with the divine subject.<sup>745</sup>

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<sup>742</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 33.

<sup>743</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 224.

<sup>744</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 14.

<sup>745</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 194.

Only humans are called to be covenant partners because God willed that He ‘should enter into covenant with us, that there should be this divine Yes originally addressed only to us.’<sup>746</sup> As exclusive as this might appear however, with an outright rejection of not only the angelic, but also the rest of the whole created cosmos outside of the human to be a partner in the covenant, this is not where Barth suggests it ends. In his *Church Dogmatics*, Barth hints at this, repeatedly stating that though humans are the only partner to the covenant, they are not the only group to participate in all the benefits it entails. Humans are the representative creature, the creature through which the rest of the created order is enabled to be embraced by the very same covenantal plans God has for humans: ‘It is man in covenant with God who reveals this plan. He does so representatively for the whole cosmos. He is not actually alone. He is in the cosmos .... As God’s covenant with him is disclosed, the cosmos is shown to be embraced by the same covenant.’<sup>747</sup> Yet before turning to the second section of this chapter and its discussion of representation, there is still more to say about how nonhuman animals exist within the covenant. Barth’s account of how the nonhuman animal features within the covenantal promises of God is both highly interesting as well as useful, for while Barth denies that nonhuman creatures are covenant partners, he actively describes a meaningful position for them within God’s covenantal designs.

Within III/1 Barth creates a short space to discuss the way in which nonhuman animals are involved in the covenant. Though lengthy, it is worth quoting a section to highlight a number of points:

He [the human] alone is honoured to be God’s partner in the covenant of grace. With him alone will there be an independent history. But in all these things the beast will be a constant companion. Everything which will take place between God and himself is to be significantly accompanied by what takes place, by life and death, in the animal kingdom; and in the events it will have witness which cannot be silenced even where human witnesses fail, and which will often speak more forcefully and impressively than all human witnesses. Man’s salvation and perdition, his joy and sorrow, will be reflected in the weal and woe of this animal environment and company. Not as an independent partner of the covenant, but as

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<sup>746</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 40.

<sup>747</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 18-19.

an attendant, the animal will participate with man (the independent partner) in the covenant, sharing both the promise and the curse which shadows the promise.<sup>748</sup>

The first point to note is the way in which Barth repeats the idea that though humans are unique in being covenant partners with God, they are always accompanied in this role by the nonhuman animal creation. Other animals are ‘a constant companion’ and the history between God and humanity is ‘significantly accompanied’ by the nonhuman animal kingdom. Second, what happens to humans, both the good and the bad, as a point of order, happens to other creatures.<sup>749</sup> Third, while humans alone are the covenant partner with God, Barth suggests that nonhuman animals have the position of attendants. Such a position enables other creatures to ‘participate with man in the covenant, sharing both the promise and the curse.’ So, though nonhuman animals are not covenant partners, God still wills for them to partake of the promises of the covenant, although to do so via the human. Each of these points suggests that for Barth, nonhuman animals were theologically significant enough to discuss regarding the covenant, and that they are closely joined to their fellow human animal, not only in the covenant history, but also in the covenantal promises. Such ideas can account for both Barth’s general focus on the human with regards to the covenant (on top of the fact that he is a human, writing for humans), as well as also demonstrating other areas where Barth includes all creation in God’s covenantal election: ‘Again, God elects that He shall be the covenant-God. He does so in order not to be alone in His divine glory, but to let heaven and earth, and between them man, be the witness of His glory.’<sup>750</sup> Though all creation is said to be included in God’s election, the human plays a central role in how this is brought about. This account of the inclusion of the nonhuman within God’s covenantal history and promises makes possible a way of retaining a human theological uniqueness, while also ensuring that the rest of creation is included within the same covenantal promises of God.

There are some however, who suggest that Barth’s position is unfavourable to nonhuman animals at this point. Andrew Linzey argues:

It is difficult to know what Barth means by this notion of attending. It cannot be claimed, of course, that animals are the major covenant partners. He is surely right in supposing that they stand at some distance within the covenant relationship

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<sup>748</sup> Barth, *CD III/1*, 178.

<sup>749</sup> This idea is a highly biblical one, and the shared rewards and punishments between human and nonhuman animals is one that is repeated, e.g. Ezekiel 14:19; Jeremiah 12:4, 14:4-6, 21:6, 51:22-23; Jonah 3, Zech. 14:12-15; Zeph. 1:2-3; Isaiah 24:4-6.

<sup>750</sup> Barth, *CD II/2.1*, 11.

itself. They are “forerunners”, “companions”, brute “witnesses” and “precursor(s) of man”. But where Barth fails to account for the biblical material is in his implication that animals are not actually part of the covenant at all. Their role and significance may be as Barth describes as prefiguring and precursing that of man, but they can only do so as they stand alongside man within the covenant relationship.<sup>751</sup>

Linzey is quite right in that it is difficult to know what Barth means by ‘attending’ for Barth does not set aside space to discuss his meaning. The idea that Barth implies that they are not actually part of the covenant however, seems at great odds with the material examined above. Later on Linzey acknowledges that Barth distinguishes between partner and attendant, and accepts that such a distinction may have a place within understanding the role of nonhuman animals within the covenantal relationship.<sup>752</sup> Yet Linzey then goes on to suggest that if nonhuman animals did not have the capacity to be full covenant partners (lacking a freedom for instance which humans possess), then this would place freedom in a significant position which Barth is not willing to give it. It is quite true that Barth does not give freedom, or any other human quality or capacity a deciding importance with regards to the covenant. As noted above, Barth is clear that humans are not made covenant partners *because* they have certain capacities. Rather, the reason why humans are the chosen covenant partner is that God has willed that it is the human creature that He will enter into covenant with, and thus they have the capacities this calling requires. This, and no other aspect, is the deciding basis for why humans are the covenant partner.

Another theologian who has taken issue with Barth’s seemingly exclusive choice of a single covenant partner is David Clough. He observes:

Karl Barth’s theology is a good example of a tendency to identify the work and person of Jesus Christ with humanity so closely that the rest of creation seems to suffer from neglect ... Jesus Christ is interested only in the salvation of human beings, nothing else, and only human beings are determined by God as covenant-partners. Humanity is “the partner in the covenant of grace which is the whole basis and aim of creation”. This exclusive emphasis on the humanity of Christ in

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<sup>751</sup> Linzey, Andrew. *The Neglected Creature: The Doctrine of the Non-human and its Relationship with the Human in the Thought of Karl Barth*. PhD Thesis. London: Kings College, 1986, 72.

<sup>752</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 95.

combination with Barth's Christological focus means there is little space for consideration of other creatures.<sup>753</sup>

Clough is quite accurate in highlighting Barth's focus on the human, and especially the humanity of Christ. Yet, based on what has been shown above, Clough's implications for what it means to be a covenant partner, and a covenant attendant, do not seem to match with those of Barth. Though Barth has a focus on the human, and the humanity of Christ, Barth is also very clear that nonhuman animals are included within God's redemptive concerns and share in the same covenant promises. Although they have a different position within the covenant than humans, nonhuman creatures are not absent from God's soteriological plans for creation. Likewise, a focus on the human does not imply that there is little space for other creatures, especially, as will be argued below, if it is in connection to the human that other creatures are involved.

Both Linzey and Clough raise significant concerns with the way in which they understand Barth's theology to progress, and the logical implications from the system they see in relation to nonhuman animals. Rather than rejecting the unique human partnership within the covenant which Barth holds so strongly to, in an effort to include nonhuman animals within the covenant, I hold the view that such a unique position can be maintained while the inclusion of nonhumans in the covenantal promises is achieved. Such a position holds a great deal of promise in rendering a theological account of the value of nonhuman creatures for their inclusion in the covenant. *That* this is the case in the writings of Barth was briefly shown above. *How* this is achieved is the topic of the second section of this chapter where the calling of humans as not just covenant partners, but as creatures willed by God to be the representatives through whom all creatures may partake of the covenant promises, will be examined. Given such a unique calling by God for humanity, it is for this reason first and foremost that God willed to become incarnate as a human, rather than any other creature.

### *Section Summary*

This chapter began by asking the question, *why did God become incarnate?* The answer was very quickly found in Barth's understanding of the covenant which is the most central of God's wills for creation. Addressing Barth's answer to this question was also a way of making the case that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human, and

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<sup>753</sup> Clough, David. *On Animals: Vol. 1 Systematic Theology*. London: T&T Clark, 2012, 89-90.



this case was made through the three subsections. In the various core concepts of the covenant, nonhuman animals, alike to humans, find their basis and future. Next, how the covenant is expressed in the covenantal history was considered, and Barth's expression of a cosmic Fall is matched by his understanding of a cosmic redemption, a redemption that includes nonhuman animals. Finally, the covenant parties, including God, Jesus, humanity, and nonhuman animals, were examined to show how each were involved in the covenant. The special role of nonhuman animals as covenant attendants rather than partners was reviewed in particular to show how such a position is one of value (they are included in the covenant), while still making it possible to retain something of a unique theological position of the human (the covenant partner). I defended Barth against two theologians who claim that his account renders nonhuman animals excluded from the covenant, and instead showed how a unique human position within the covenant can be held, while the full inclusion of nonhuman animals is also maintained. These subsections have shown that nonhuman animals are included in God's creative plans, and are also included in God's redemptive plans, and as such, are included in the covenantal will of God. Both human and nonhuman share in the covenant promises of God. Yet as will be detailed next, the inclusion of nonhuman creatures is one that occurs through the human. How Barth's theology enables us to think in such a way is beneficial for not only understanding nonhuman animal inclusion within the covenant, but ultimately for understanding why, in the incarnation, God choose to become human rather than any other creature.

## **Section 2: Representation**

### *Introduction*

The second section of this chapter examines the idea of representation as a driving basis for God's decision to become incarnate as a human being. In this section the question which has been driving this thesis, *why did God become human in the incarnation?*, will find an answer within the theological writings of Barth. Having examined and rejected as insufficient three significant answers to the question as found in the writings of Anselm, Gregory of Nyssa, and Maximus the Confessor, in this section it will be argued that in light of the implications which nonhuman animals create, the human calling as representatives is the most sufficient answer for why God became human in particular. Due to the unique human calling as the representative creature, it is as a human that God willed to become

incarnate such that the covenantal desires of God (including the overcoming of sin and evil and the goal of participation with God) would be achieved for the whole of the created order. Within the theological writings of Barth, we have a useful basis for understanding how such representational theology works, though there will need to be some work in constructing this into a useful theology as Barth did not focus on this specific topic.

In my second section I will make the case for the second and third theses of this dissertation: that God became human in particular because they are the representative creature, and that such a representational calling entails certain ethical implications on the part of humans. A critical look at Barth's account of representation will show it to be highly useful in understanding why God became human in particular, while an equally critical examination of his account of the ethical and sanctifying implications will show it needs adjusting. This section proceeds by first detailing what representation is for Barth. Next the representational roles of Jesus Christ who acts as the basis for understanding what role humans are to have as representatives is explored. After this, the human calling for representation will be detailed, including understanding what representation is and what such representation entails. This will show how representation is a dual-directionality of communication between God and creation, with a responsibility on the part of the human to communicate for both. I will then focus more on the implications which such a calling has for humans with regards to nonhuman animals. How the human calling to be representatives can be lived out will be looked at, along with the necessary ethical implications which this has for the human in their relation to the nonhuman creation. Here, I will show that Barth goes against his broader theology which secures a place for the nonhuman creation, and instead either makes seemingly contradictory claims (with regards to the human ethical response towards nonhuman animals), or is relatively silent on important related topics (e.g. the sanctification of the nonhuman creation). With regards to sanctification, I will demonstrate how the earlier examined theology of Maximus the Confessor provides a useful framework for enabling Barth's theology of sanctification (as it relates to the nonhuman creation) to be brought into line with his useful broader theology.

### *Defining Representation*

Barth does not set aside specific space to discuss representation in detail. Instead, one finds the concept spread throughout a range of his writings. Barth expresses representation in two ways: acting as a representative of communications/revelations from one party to

another, as well as taking the place of the other and being able to, because one is the representative of the respective party. In addition, Barth also understands there to be representation both from God to creation, as well as from creation to God. Understanding these two main uses, and the inclusion of representational dialogue both from God and towards God, will give a sufficient basis for interacting with a theology of representation that is found within the writings of Barth, and which gives backing for an ethical responsibility towards those being represented.

The first major way in which Barth uses the concept of representation is that of standing in for another, or acting on behalf of another. When Barth speaks of representation in this way, he is primarily descriptive of the representation as found in Jesus Christ, rather than a representation more broadly shared with humanity. Such representational ‘standing in’ for the other makes up a significant part of what Barth means by representation, especially with regards to the covenantal and redemptive acts of God in Christ. With regards to the covenant, as noted above, it is Christ who is the covenant partner with God, and only through him, humanity:

The partner of God which cannot now be thought away is neither “man” as an idea, nor “humanity,” nor indeed a large or small total of individual men. Thus it is only insofar as Christ is the representative of humans that humans are enabled to be the covenant partner of God. It is the one man Jesus and the people represented in Him.<sup>754</sup>

In moving from the covenant more generally to the incarnation, Barth describes how Christ’s incarnation was in part motivated by his corresponding role as Representative, living and dying for the sake of all believers and for the whole world.<sup>755</sup> In becoming himself a creature, Christ was able to act as the creaturely Representative before God and to act on their behalf. Later on within *Church Dogmatics*, Barth writes on how redemption is brought about by the fact that Christ could take the place of fallen humanity.<sup>756</sup> Because Jesus is our human Representative before God, he can take our place, and act in our name, such that salvation is enabled for all those Christ represents.

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<sup>754</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1, 8.

<sup>755</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 2.

<sup>756</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 230.

The second main way in which Barth understands representation is that of a communication or revelation from one party to another. Representation as communication follows naturally (though not necessarily) from the idea of standing in the place of another, for in embodying one being to another, a very real chance exists for communication or revelation to occur. This is true both with regards to Jesus Christ and the rest of humanity. Within *Church Dogmatics* I/2 Barth writes regarding Jesus: ‘He represents God to us and He represents us to God. In this way He is God’s revelation to us and our reconciliation with God.’<sup>757</sup> Here Barth is expressing both the dual direction of representation (from God to creation, and from creation to God), as well as the revelatory nature of representation. Later on in III/2 Barth notes that Jesus is ‘the Representative of the uniqueness and transcendence of God,’<sup>758</sup> again highlighting that representation is communicative. Concerning humans, Barth writes that ‘In [the human’s] dignity and position he can only be God’s creaturely witness and representative to [nonhuman animals].’<sup>759</sup> With regards to the covenant, Barth notes: ‘It is man in covenant with God who reveals this plan. He does so representatively for the whole cosmos ... As God’s covenant with him is disclosed, the cosmos is shown to be embraced by the same covenant.’<sup>760</sup> Thus the representative human creature enables a revelation of God towards creation through the human. Barth also gives hints of the way in which humans might communicate on behalf of creation to God through prayer.<sup>761</sup> Representation then, entails communication and one which has the capacity to be directed in both directions. Both forms of representation, standing in and communicating for another, are ways in which Barth details representation. The human calling of representation however, is not one that Barth would allow to be examined on its own, independent of the Representative. To have any understanding of the human calling as representative in particular, requires that one first have a sufficient understanding of how Jesus is the Representative as well as the Mediator.

### *Jesus as Representative*

Having specified what Barth means by representation, we can now turn to those who are representatives. Following along with Barth, I will begin with Jesus. Just as Jesus is the

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<sup>757</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics Volume I, Part 2*. Edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. Translated by G.T. Thomson and Harold Knight. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963, 151.

<sup>758</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 144.

<sup>759</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 187-88.

<sup>760</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 18-19.

<sup>761</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 279.

central character of the covenant, and it is only by understanding the covenant through him that we can understand the human role as covenant partner, so too is the case with representation. As already noted above, Jesus is not merely a representative, but the Representative. Given the importance of representation for what it means to be human that this chapter will suggest, if as Barth claims, it is true that '[w]e derived wholly from Jesus not merely our potential and actual relation to God, but even our human nature as such,'<sup>762</sup> then to understand the human role as representative requires first understanding Jesus as Representative. However this is not to say that the human calling to representation is the exact same as that of Christ. While it is true for Barth that knowledge of human nature necessarily is based on knowledge of Christ due to his humanity, this does not mean that humans are in any way equal with Christ. Barth notes that 'He alone is in the true sense of the word the Representative, Instrument, Ambassador and Plenipotentiary of God in the creaturely world ... In these capacities, which devolve on Him alone, we can only follow and serve Him, with no dignity or power which are not His and do not redound to His glory.'<sup>763</sup> Thus the human calling as representative is based on Christ as Representative, but it is not equal to it. As noted above, Barth does not set aside specific space to detail his thoughts on representation, and so does not discuss how Christ's nature as Representative is illustrative of the subsequent human calling. Below, I will demonstrate how such a distinction is made in Barth's writings, beginning with Christ before turning to the human calling as representatives.

Regarding the place of Jesus as both Representative and Mediator, Barth is abundantly clear. These two roles for Barth are fairly synonymous, with each referring to the ability to stand in the place of another and communicate on their behalf. Barth refers to the Son repeatedly as the Representative throughout the *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>764</sup> Here, it is due to the Son's incarnation and existence as both true God and true human that he is therefore able to act as the Representative of both groups.<sup>765</sup> In addition to acting as the Representative, Barth also describes this role of Christ as Mediator; just as Barth repeatedly refers to Jesus as the Representative, so too throughout the *Church Dogmatics* does he refer to Jesus as the Mediator.<sup>766</sup> Here, as in the case of his ability to stand within the role of Representative,

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<sup>762</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 50.

<sup>763</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 49.

<sup>764</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1, 7, 53; *CD* III/1, 26, 97; III/2, 144; III/3, 276; IV/2, 515-16, 527; IV/3.1, 11, 275. See also Barth, 'The Humanity of God', 44.

<sup>765</sup> Barth, *CD* II/2.1, 7; *CD* IV/1, 135.

<sup>766</sup> Barth, *CD* I/2, 32, 106, II/2.1, 62; III/1, 55-6; III/3, 271; IV/1, 47, 123, 131, 135; IV/3.1, 275.

Christ's dual nature is essential for his capacity to act as Mediator.<sup>767</sup> Christ as Representative and Mediator acts and communicates on behalf of both God and humanity, that is he communicates and acts on behalf of God to creation, as well as creation towards God. Though Christ is often understood as God's movement and revelation from God to creation, Barth understands there to be a dual movement, and this movement in Christ has significant bearing on how we are to understand the human calling to representation and mediation.

The main way in which Jesus is thought to provide communication and revelation (through being the Representative) is often from the divine to the human. Because Jesus is fully God while being fully human, he is able to express the divine to humanity. Barth notes the idea of representation from 'above to below' throughout his writings in two different ways. On the one hand, Jesus Christ is God's communication of the Godself, a representation of who and what God is, to creation.<sup>768</sup> Yet Christ does more than communicate certain aspects of God. In addition to expressing something of the divine, Jesus also communicates God's will to and for the world. Jesus 'comes forward to *man* on behalf of *God* calling for and awakening faith, love, and hope.'<sup>769</sup> With Jesus we have the clearest expression of who God is and what His will for creation is. Yet Barth is equally clear that just as Christ is God's representation to the creation, he is also creation's representative to God. Barth describes Christ as being 'the Representative of each believer before God,'<sup>770</sup> and repeatedly affirms that Christ represents us to God.<sup>771</sup> Such dual directionality is closely united in Barth's writings, and most cases which describe one direction of representation also describe the other, as in the example above 'He represents God to us and He represents us to God. In this way He is God's revelation to us and our reconciliation with God.'<sup>772</sup> Such dual-directed communication is thus an essential aspect of what representation means for Barth and Jesus as Representative. Before turning to the human as representative, it is also briefly worth noting that though the majority of Barth's writings refer to Jesus as the Representative with regards to representing humanity, Barth is quite clear, though in limited cases, that Christ is also the Representative of the whole of creation.

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<sup>767</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/1, 135.

<sup>768</sup> Barth, *CD* I/2, 151; III/2, 144.

<sup>769</sup> Barth, 'The Humanity of God', 44.

<sup>770</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 26.

<sup>771</sup> Barth, *CD* I/2, 151; II/2.1, 61; IV/3.1, 275; 'The Humanity of God', 44.

<sup>772</sup> Barth, *CD* I/2, 151. See also IV/3.1, 275 where Barth writes that Christ 'is in His own person and work both the representative of God to man and the Representative of man before God,' and II/2.1, 94, where Barth writes that 'Between God and man there stands the person of Jesus Christ, Himself God and Himself man, and so mediating between the two. In Him God reveals Himself to man. In Him man sees and knows God.'

Within the writings of Barth, the representation of Christ is more often focused on how Christ represents God to humanity and humanity to God. This is to be expected given that not only is Barth's audience human, but the human plays a more significant and central role within his theology. Yet just as Barth focuses more on the place of humans within the covenant while still ensuring a place for nonhuman creation, so too does Barth write on the role of Christ as Representative not only of humanity, but the Representative of the cosmos. Barth writes that 'The man Jesus, and again we start with Him, is the sum of the divine address, the Word of God, to the created cosmos.'<sup>773</sup> Here, the communication of God to creation that takes place in the person of Christ is directed not just to humanity, but to the whole created realm. However the clearest expression of Christ as Representative of the whole cosmos comes from III/1 where Barth writes that 'The inner basis of the covenant is simply the free love of God, or more precisely the eternal covenant which God has decreed in Himself as the covenant of the Father with His Son as the Lord and Bearer of human nature, and to that extent the Representative of all creation.'<sup>774</sup> Within this passage, the central role which human nature has is highlighted by Barth, for it is to the extent that the Son is the Bearer of human nature, that he is the Representative of all creation. Linzey states 'That the Son should be the *Vertreter* [Representative] of all is an important and striking implication here, but Barth nowhere develops it further. The implication is clear, that incarnation somehow involves creation, but beyond that we are not told more.'<sup>775</sup> Linzey is partially correct in his assessment. Following this statement, Barth fails to elucidate further what implications Christ as cosmic Representative might have. Yet as this quotation highlights, the implications are to be found in the way and calling which humans have as representatives within creation, a calling which connects them to the whole created realm. The way in which Barth's theology enables not simply a meaningful understanding of representation, but also demonstrates how this is based on the person of Christ, is highly useful in detailing how representation operates for humans. The dual directionality of such representation, and its cosmic reach, have direct implications for understanding the unique calling given to humans to be the covenantal representative creature.

### *Human Representation*<sup>776</sup>

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<sup>773</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 147.

<sup>774</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 97.

<sup>775</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 152.

<sup>776</sup> Though there is not sufficient space in this thesis to discuss how Barth understands humans to be unique creatures beyond their calling to covenantal representation, the fact of their uniqueness is an idea he holds.

Humans are made to be the covenant partner. How this role is to be lived out, the ultimate expression of what it means to be a representative, is found in Jesus Christ; the way in which Jesus acts as the representative is illustrative of what it means for humans to represent as well. This representation can be broadly understood in one of two ways: representing God to creation, and creation to God. Just as Jesus ‘represents God to us and He represents us to God,’<sup>777</sup> so too does it follow that the human calling to representation is also dual-directional. Here we begin to move from what representation is, and the basis for it, to how it is expressed. Barth’s account of the dual-directionality of representation is true to his account of Christ’s, and as will be shown below, this has implications for human responsibility. The first way we can use to examine this is the representation of God to creation, or a top/down approach.

The human calling to represent God to creation is expressed by Barth in various ways. One important way in which humans do this is through the human nature as images of God. The communicative nature of imaging God is a way in which the divine is represented to the creation. As noted by Suzanne McDonald, ‘On the basis of the Genesis account, human beings may be thought to represent God to the created order.’<sup>778</sup> Yet Barth details such representation in more than his discussions of the image of God. Regarding the nonhuman animal creation, Barth writes that humans are to ‘be God’s creaturely witness and representative to them.’<sup>779</sup> An essential part of what it means to be the image of God and having authority within creation is expressed by Barth as acting as God’s witness and representative to nonhuman animals. Humans are to witness to nonhuman creatures, and to be

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Beyond their unique calling, Barth suggests human uniqueness is found in both their capacities (e.g. rationality, language) (*CD III/2*, 77-90), as well as their created natures (image of God, microcosm). I noted in previous chapters the questionable nature of the first of these distinctions (e.g. of viewing humans as uniquely rational). The second grouping has been the topic of chapters 2 and 3. Barth’s contributions to these concepts briefly are that his understanding of the image of God is relationally-based (*CD III/1*, 178-85; *III/2*, 323; *III/4*, 43-44), and that his understanding of the microcosmic nature of humans is seemingly contradictory. While Barth denies the claim that humans are microcosmic (*CD III/2*, 16), he nonetheless suggests that ‘in the centre between heaven and earth as their unity is man,’ (*CD III/1*, 20) and that humans are an ‘earthly representation of the whole of created reality’ (*CD III/2*, 351). Such understandings are based on Barth’s view that the human is ‘besouled body and bodily soul’ and is therefore linked with both earthly creation, as well as ‘partak[ing] of the heavenly side of the cosmos’ (*CD III/2*, 351). Given this, Barth’s theology seems to support the idea of humans as created with a connection to the whole of creation, connecting his ideas with those of Gregory and Maximus.

<sup>777</sup> Barth, *CD I/2*, 151.

<sup>778</sup> McDonald, *Re-Imaging Election*, 91. Though McDonald notes the connection between imaging God and representation to the nonhuman creation here, the main thrust of her argument is focused on the elect imaging God to the non-elect, rather than all humans (as images of God) imaging to the rest of creation. The idea human representation to the nonhuman creation has also been briefly noted by Dianne L. Oliver, ‘Christ in the World: The Christological Vision of Dorothee Soelle’ in *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle*, edited by Sarah K. Pinnock. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003, 111; and Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 190, 220-21.

<sup>779</sup> Barth, *CD III/1*, 187.



God's representative to them. It is not until later on within III/2 however, that Barth suggests how humans might witness to the nonhuman creation. Within III/2, he writes that God's 'purpose towards the [cosmos], although hidden as such, is none other than His revealed purpose for us. Hence in the disclosed relationship of God with man there is disclosed also His relationship with the universe.'<sup>780</sup> Thus God's plan and purpose for creation is to be found in his relationship with us, a relationship which the nonhuman creation is called to be a part of. What this 'purpose' entails is described by Barth: 'It is man in covenant with God who reveals this plan. He does so representatively for the whole cosmos.... As God's covenant with him is disclosed, the cosmos is shown to be embraced by the same covenant.'<sup>781</sup> God's covenantal desire and plans for humanity are revealed to be representative of His covenantal inclusion of the nonhuman creation as well, through the human. As the creature made by God to be the creaturely representative within the covenant, the human is the creature through whom God's covenantal will for creation is expressed. God's plans for creation and His will for creation is revealed to the human creature for the benefit of the whole of the cosmos.

The second direction in which representation can occur is representing creation to God. The way in which Barth describes this concept is narrower than how he describes the human representation of God to creation. Whereas humans both imaged God and represented His will to the created order, here they are found to speak to God on behalf of the cosmos. Barth takes up this idea within *Church Dogmatics* III/3. In this work he writes regarding the 'asking community' of believers, that such a community 'stands together with its Lord before God on behalf of all creation.... The asking of this community anticipates as it were that of creation as a whole. It gives voice and expression to the groaning of creation.'<sup>782</sup> Humans, when they are existing within the community which strives to be in relation with God, are those which speak 'on behalf of all creation.' Though Barth does not explicitly speak of humans as representatives here, the idea is quite clear in that humans are the creatures speaking on behalf of creation. Given the fallen state of existence which humans share with nonhumans, humans are the creature called to give voice to the creation before God. Barth repeats the idea that humans are called to 'pray for all men and for all creation,'<sup>783</sup> and that humans are called to not only pray for but also to groan with all other humans and all other

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<sup>780</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 18.

<sup>781</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 18-19.

<sup>782</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 279.

<sup>783</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 282.

creatures.<sup>784</sup> This is not to say that other creatures cannot call out to God on their own, nor that God is unable to speak to nonhuman animals; the Bible clearly describes such cases.<sup>785</sup> Yet these biblical cases seem generally to be based on cases where nonhuman animals are in need, or where nonhuman animals are being used by God to work towards changing the failed path humans have chosen. Or, put another way, they are generally cases where humans are failing to either give voice to the needs of creation, or to live in the ways which God has assigned for them. Barth seems to connect the dual-direction of the human representational calling in a brief verse from III/3:

The friends of God are the creatures to whom He has given His grace and also a definite commission in the world. It is for the sake of His business, and therefore - because His business concerns the whole of creation – for the sake of creation as a whole, that God calls them to faith and obedience and also to prayer. It is in their official capacity in this respect that He allows Christians a voice and a part in the formulation and execution of His will.<sup>786</sup>

Here, humans are given a commission in the world and have an official capacity to not only have faith and be obedient to God's desires for them and for creation, but also to prayer. Such prayer seems to suggest both offering up to God the needs of creation and also receiving knowledge from God about how to fulfil such needs. In such a way, humans can live in obedience to God's plans for creation and do so 'for the sake of creation as a whole.' This is both a coherent account of the unique calling of humans to dual-representation, and expressive of a way (prayer) that such representation can have a practical means. It also recognises multiple types of communication: not only can humans seek God's guidance with regards to creation, but they can also express the frustrations which the whole cosmos share. What this selection strongly implies is that humans, as the creature who God has willed to covenant with, and who represent both God's will towards creation and creation's needs to God, stand in a position of authority and responsibility. The responsibility which humans

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<sup>784</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 280. Another expression of this idea can be found in the work of Jürgen Moltmann. Within *God in Creation* (190) he shares in this idea of the human as representing creation to God: 'As microcosm the human being represents the macrocosm. As 'image of the world' he stands before God as the representative of all other creatures. He lives, speaks and acts on their behalf. Understood as *imago mundi*, human beings are priestly creations and eucharistic beings. They intercede before God for the community of creation.'

<sup>785</sup> For examples of nonhuman animals calling to God see Psalm 147:9 and Job 38:41. For examples of God speaking to nonhuman animals, see Isaiah 46:11 and Jonah 2:10.

<sup>786</sup> Barth, *CD* III/3, 287-88.

have as representatives is the ethical aspect of what it means to be the representational creature assigned by God for their ‘commission in the world.’

Barth repeatedly affirms the idea that humans are responsible creatures. While the majority of such discussions involve the human responsibility to God,<sup>787</sup> as noted above, Barth also understands the human to be in some way responsible to the rest of creation. For Barth the human creature is one which is, by nature, necessarily responsible: ‘To be a man is to be responsible. To be a man is to respond to what is said to man. The spontaneity of man consists in the fact that he is capable of this responsibility.’<sup>788</sup> Given the picture of humanity which has been shown through the writings of Barth, where the human is the covenant partner, made in the divine image and called to representation, responsibility is to be expected. Such responsibility appears uniquely human: ‘Man is the one creature which God in creating calls to free personal responsibility before Him.’<sup>789</sup> Yet all this discussion is for nothing if responsibility is not securely fixed to the idea of the human as the representative creature. Barth makes clear, in a number of areas, that the human calling to representation is one which necessarily entails responsibility for the cosmos whom they represent. Within III/4, Barth describes how the Church is to be responsible for the world around us, representing God to the world, and the world to God.<sup>790</sup> Here his emphasis seems to be on the Church’s responsibilities towards humanity. Very shortly after however, Barth states that ‘[the human] does not merely represent himself, or the community in the world, but mankind and the world as a whole before God.’<sup>791</sup> The ‘Church is to be responsible for the world around us’<sup>792</sup>, and that includes both our fellow humans as well as the rest of the cosmos. Therefore the human calling of responsibility means working towards serving not just humanity, but the whole created reality. Further along in III/4, Barth describes how the human act of obedience and service is one for the whole cosmos, such that the whole creation waits for it, and that:

if he is obedient to it, if his action is service, it always includes the general fact that he looks and strives beyond himself, that he actualizes his existence in his relationship to another, that he is thus integrated into the order of all creatures,

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<sup>787</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 198, 237; III/2, 126, 176-94, 347, 406; III/4, 47, 103-05, 350-52.

<sup>788</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 126.

<sup>789</sup> Barth, *CD* III/2, 194.

<sup>790</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 103.

<sup>791</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 104.

<sup>792</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 103.

and that he therefore participates at his own place and in his own way in the freedom of every creature.<sup>793</sup>

Thus humans really are, Barth suggests, ‘made responsible for the cosmos.’<sup>794</sup> Barth’s account of the uniquely human calling to responsible representation holds a great deal of potential for positioning the human within the theological stage in such a way that their uniqueness does not separate them from the rest of creation, but by its very definition, does the opposite. Yet this presentation of the human can be brought even further with regards to its connection to the nonhuman creation, for the human calling to representation is one which includes acting for and serving the nonhuman cosmos. Due to the nature of representation noted throughout this section, how it is expressed has ethical implications towards the nonhuman creation. Below, I will explain how the representational theology which Barth provides has significant ethical and sanctifying implications for humans, thus making the case for my third of my theses.

### **Section 3: Ethics and Sanctification**

#### *Introduction*

Up until this point I critically engaged with the theology of Barth in regards to the human role within the covenant to show it is an adequate and useful framework for explaining why God became human in the incarnation. In doing so, I used the writings of Barth to defend against a number of criticisms made against his covenantal theology. Barth’s theology is useful in not only expressing the unique human nature as covenant partner, but also in placing nonhuman creatures meaningfully within a theological system that recognises them as having a place within the covenant. Insofar as it does this, it is a constructive theology that adds to the first two proposals being argued in this thesis. There are other aspects of Barth’s work, however, that need correction in order to be useful in the same way, namely his theology related to the ethical responsibilities of humans towards nonhumans, and the related human calling to sanctification. Though each has potential and some useful aspects (such as Barth’s presentation of prayer for creation), they both stand in need of adjustment to be more consistent to Barth’s broader theology, and it is Barth’s own theology which I will use to highlight some of the problems that Barth’s presentation of ethics and

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<sup>793</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 478.

<sup>794</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/3.1, 147-48.

sanctification have towards nonhuman animals. Below I will suggest a way in which Barth's theological ethics might be understood as consistent, though this is one built from the basis of his fruitful broader nonhuman animal theology. Likewise I will examine Barth's construal of sanctification, and suggest that though it is possible to place the implications onto nonhuman animals, Barth's neglect in this area needs rectifying. The work of Maximus the Confessor, and his theology of the mediatorial roles for humans provides a useful pattern for how this might be achieved in the work of Barth.

### *Ethical Implications*

Given the value which Barth's theology of the representational role of humanity has with regards to the ethical treatment of nonhuman animals, the very real question remains as to how the human can, as the representational covenant creature, live out their calling with regards to their responsibility towards the nonhuman creation. Linzey suggests that 'There is little in Barth's exposition of human responsibility that we would want to argue with, except that as defined this responsibility extends only to his fellow man and to God. There is no sense of responsibility articulated towards the created world in general or animals in particular.'<sup>795</sup> As above with regards to the covenantal inclusion of nonhuman animals, Linzey makes claims contrary to what one finds in Barth's writings. It is true that Barth differentiates between responsibilities towards humans and nonhumans,<sup>796</sup> yet this is not what Linzey takes issue with.<sup>797</sup> As noted by Adam McIntosh, 'Barth's primary concern is to avoid the reduction in human life, which he believes will result from espousing an equal responsibility for all life forms.'<sup>798</sup> Instead, Linzey seems to feel that Barth claims that human responsibility ignores any place for the nonhuman, yet as shown above, such a claim is quite untrue. Just as Barth understands the human calling to representation as inclusive of the nonhuman creation, the same is also true of human responsibility. Though Linzey seems misguided in this particular critique of Barth, the assertions he makes with regards to responsibility towards nonhuman animals are quite important. Linzey writes that 'Responsibility must go beyond reverence for all creation in insisting upon the claims of animals in particular,'<sup>799</sup> and that 'If responsibility means anything it must involve the

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<sup>795</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 231.

<sup>796</sup> Barth, *CD III/4*, 350.

<sup>797</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 296. Here, Linzey writes that 'Of course it would be entirely disproportionate to locate responsibility for the non-human alone as the primary human responsibility. But there are good reasons for regarding it as far more important than Barth will admit.'

<sup>798</sup> McIntosh, Adam. 'Human and Animal Relations in the Theology of Karl Barth' in *Pacifica*, 22/1 (2009) 25.

<sup>799</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 298.

curbing of our appetites, the restraining of our greed and the protection of innocent life.<sup>800</sup>

Barth clearly includes nonhuman animals within the scope of his theology regarding a responsible and representative covenant partner, yet how the ethical workings of such a theology are to be made active still needs answering.

Barth suggests three ways in which humans might have an ethical calling with regards to nonhuman animals. The first, prayer, has already been noted a number of times. Prayer was repeatedly, although briefly, touched upon as it related to the communicative and representational roles given to humans with regards to nonhuman creation. Barth repeats the idea of humans praying on behalf of not just humanity, but on behalf of the cosmos a number of times.<sup>801</sup> Prayer for the world and all its inhabitants – both human and nonhuman – is not an extra bit of Christian living that some might do if they feel so inclined. Instead, Barth is clear that prayer for the cosmos is part of our calling: ‘It is for the sake of His business, and therefore – because His business concerns the whole of creation – for the sake of creation as a whole, that God calls them [the friends of God] to faith and obedience and also to prayer.’<sup>802</sup> The human commission contains a calling to pray for the entire world because the entire world is God’s business. Earlier within III/4 Barth suggests that ‘Prayer is here made expressly for what all mankind and the whole world has need of, for what is of benefit for absolutely everyone,’<sup>803</sup> and that:

The community believes, prays and asks only as the representative of the universal subject, of mankind and the world; and the closely knit fellowship is necessarily in its asking one which is open to all, to the whole of creation. He who asks in the community, prays with the brethren together with whom he knows the one Lord over all.<sup>804</sup>

As the representative creature, the human, and indeed the human Christian community, is to pray for the whole of creation, and such prayers are expressly for the whole world. As the creature responsible for communicating to God the needs and desires of the created order, prayer is one means by which the ethical calling of serving the created order can be fulfilled.

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<sup>800</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 299.

<sup>801</sup> Barth, *CD III/3*, 279, 282, 287-88; *CD III/4*, 104.

<sup>802</sup> Barth, *CD III/3*, 287-88.

<sup>803</sup> Barth, *CD III/3*, 104.

<sup>804</sup> Barth, *CD III/3*, 103.

Such prayer is essential for communicating the needs of creation to God, and knowing how humans are to treat the created order.

In addition to his discussions regarding the human calling to pray for the nonhuman creation, Barth also gives a surprisingly detailed account of not only the value of nonhuman animals, but also the right of humans to take their lives. As noted above, nonhuman animals share in God's covenantal plans with humans, and are ultimately included in its redemptive promises. In addition, Barth briefly details some biblical passages which speak of God's care and concern for the nonhuman creation, such that they are included in the Sabbath rest (Ex. 20.12, 23.12) and that God has pity on them (Jon. 4.11).<sup>805</sup> Yet the greatest detail regarding human treatment of nonhuman animals occurs within his discussion on the taking of nonhuman animal life. Barth explores this idea in III/1 and III/4. Within III/1, Barth acknowledges that the original diet given to both human and nonhuman in the Genesis creation narratives is a vegetarian (and therefore peaceful) one.<sup>806</sup> The direct implication of this is that 'the supremacy given to man over the animals is not one of life and death.'<sup>807</sup> The eschatological images found in the Bible suggest that there will be a return to this state of peace, a peace which will exclude carnivorousness.<sup>808</sup> When we turn to III/4, a similar idea is described. Here Barth makes it clear that all plants and nonhuman animals belong not to humanity, but to God.<sup>809</sup> Though humans take precedence, and have a lordship over them, their lordship is limited. Barth writes that 'Responsibility within the limits of lordship as understood in this way will consist in what is proposed for our consideration in Prov. 12.10: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."<sup>810</sup> In finally turning to the question of the human right to take the life of nonhuman animals, and in line with all that was discussed above, Barth makes the astounding claim that

The harvest is not a breach in the peace of creation, nor is the tending and using of animals, but the killing of animals presupposes that the peace of creation is at least threatened and itself constitutes a continuation of this threat. And the nearness of the animal to man irrevocably means that when man kills a beast he does something which is at least very similar to homicide.<sup>811</sup>

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<sup>805</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 180.

<sup>806</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 208-09.

<sup>807</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 208.

<sup>808</sup> Barth, *CD* III/1, 212.

<sup>809</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 350-51.

<sup>810</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 352.

<sup>811</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 352-53.

Although Barth ultimately acknowledges that the biblical narrative allows for the taking of nonhuman animal life, this act can only be done when one sees oneself ‘compelled to express his lordship by depriving [the nonhuman animal] of its life.’<sup>812</sup> In doing so, one must recognise that such an allowance ‘stands under a caveat,’ and was not part of God’s original will for creation, nor is it part of God’s plans for the future; it is only in the ‘interim period’ that such a use of authority can be done.<sup>813</sup> Indeed, the human ‘must never treat this need for defensive and offensive action against the animal world as a natural one, nor include it as a normal element in his thinking of conduct.’<sup>814</sup>

All this is to say that the way in which humans treat nonhuman animals, even up to and including the taking of their lives, is a serious ethical concern. Despite Barth’s clear assertion that the importance of how humans treat nonhuman animals is not as important as how they treat other humans, he is equally clear that this is nonetheless a significant issue. Barth writes that ‘We shall have to remember that with human life as our real problem, we must take seriously the problem of animals (and in a certain sense even of plants) as a marginal problem of ethics,’<sup>815</sup> and that ‘the problem [of nonhuman animal ethics] itself is important. It may well be insoluble and barely tangible, but it is genuine and cannot be ignored.’ He also asks ‘why should we not be faced here by a responsibility [towards the nonhuman creature] which, if not primary, is a serious secondary responsibility?’<sup>816</sup> Though the problem is ‘marginal’ when compared to the same problem of ethics towards other humans, it is still a serious topic that warrants consideration. Yet when Barth turns from the broader claims to the importance of addressing the serious ethical issues humans face with regards to nonhuman animals, he fails to follow the logic of his theology which I detailed above. Although Barth relies a great deal on the eschatological biblical narratives, which speak of peace between all creatures, he repeatedly denies any implication this might have with regards to a faith-based vegetarian lifestyle. Within III/4, Barth brings up the topic of vegetarianism only twice, and never in a positive light. He suggests that such a thing would be ‘a wanton anticipation of the new aeon.’<sup>817</sup>

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<sup>812</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 354.

<sup>813</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 353.

<sup>814</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 354.

<sup>815</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 333.

<sup>816</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 351.

<sup>817</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 356-57. The other time Barth mentions vegetarianism is in a brief expression of rejecting such aesthetic practices by drawing on the example of Adolf Hitler (III/4, 349).



Here, with Linzey,<sup>818</sup> I recognize that Barth is hardly being consistent in describing the ideal way to live, yet denying any impetus for acting in such a way. Part of what Barth seems to be rejecting is not a well-founded attempt to live at peace with the rest of the created order, but with making it an absolute of Christian practice. To do so would indeed go against what Barth wrote on the topic, e.g. distinguishing between the moral worth of human and nonhuman life and suggesting there might be times and places where the responsibility of the human may have to be expressed in the taking of the nonhuman creature's life. Though the normative existence is one of peace between human and nonhuman, within the 'interim period' of life after the Fall and before the eschaton, there are times and cases where such peace may not possibly be lived out. In these instances – which Barth suggests require 'the pressure of necessity'<sup>819</sup> – the life of a nonhuman animal may be taken if done with reverence. If Barth's hesitation towards vegetarianism is seen as a reaction against the claim that humans never have authority to take the life of a nonhuman animal (in contrast with the allowance given in Genesis 9), then there is little reason to disagree with him, for it is clearly a biblical allowance. If this is the basis of his viewpoint however, it is kept quiet and the reader must ascertain this in light of his other theological work. If on the other hand, Barth is reacting against the idea of the attempt to live at peace with creation, in light of the eschatological and ethical claims of the Bible which he uses in detailing his nonhuman animal theology, then such a position can be seen as contradictory. However one wishes to read Barth on this matter, his broader theology provides an impressive and significant theological basis for treating nonhuman animals well. With regards to the treatment of nonhuman creatures, beginning with their inclusion in the covenantal promises of God, their inclusion in the redemption God brings about, and his repeated insistence on the importance of human prayer for the cosmos, Barth's theology gives his reader a great deal to work with. Linzey's remark that 'If responsibility means anything it must involve the curbing of our appetites, the restraining of our greed and the protection of innocent life,' can be fully supported by the broader theology of Barth, even if not explicitly noted by him.

### *Sanctification*

There are a number of essential ideas within Barth's treatment of sanctification that are necessary for a full understanding of this concept. More generally, sanctification involves becoming the creatures we were intended to be. Given that humans are not yet perfect,

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<sup>818</sup> Linzey, *The Neglected Creature*, 311.

<sup>819</sup> Barth, *CD* III/4, 355.

sanctification ‘involves a modification of [the human’s] situation and constitution.’<sup>820</sup> Such a modification has the covenant in mind, for sanctification ‘involves the creation of a new form of existence for man in which he can live as the loyal covenant-partner.’<sup>821</sup> The sanctification of humans means that they can become the covenant partners God intended, such that humans will no longer break the covenant. Yet there are more specific ideas that are tied to this general understanding. The first is the essential connection Barth makes between sanctification and justification. Barth writes that when ‘we speak of justification and sanctification, we have to do with two different aspects of the one event of salvation.’<sup>822</sup> The same event of salvation described above, the redemption and reconciliation that God enables through Christ, has two important sub-aspects: justification and sanctification. They are different, though they ‘belong indissolubly together.’<sup>823</sup> Given the inclusion of nonhuman animals within God’s act of salvation shown above, it has direct implications for understanding the necessary inclusion of them within the related concepts of sanctification and justification. Knowing what sanctification is and its strong connection to the greater redemptive project of God is necessary for having a working understanding of how Barth conceives of sanctification. There are two other related ideas however, which also have a significant place in the discussion as it relates to the human ethics.

The first important aspect of Barth’s theology of sanctification and its implications to ethics is that unlike other understandings whereby justification is the work of God, and sanctification the subsequent work of the creature, for Barth, both sanctification and justification are wholly the work of God. In IV/1 Barth writes that

sanctification cannot then be separated from justification, as though it has to do with man’s contribution to his reconciliation with God. Sanctification does not mean our self-sanctifying as the filling out of the justification which comes to man by God. It is sanctification by and in Jesus Christ, who, according to 1 Cor. 1.30, is made unto us both justification and sanctification.<sup>824</sup>

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<sup>820</sup> Barth, *CD IV/2*, 502.

<sup>821</sup> Barth, *CD IV/2*, 514. See also *CD IV/1*, 110-11 where Barth makes this same point.

<sup>822</sup> Barth, *CD IV/2*, 503.

<sup>823</sup> Barth, *CD IV/2*, 503.

<sup>824</sup> Barth, *CD IV/1*, 101.

This same idea is repeated within IV/2 as well.<sup>825</sup> Thus sanctification is understood, alike to justification, to be wholly the work of God. This would appear as though it leaves humans with little to do with regards to sanctification (indeed they can do nothing to make it effective), yet there is still a human response possible, and this constitutes the second main idea.<sup>826</sup> Barth distinguishes between sanctification as *de facto* and *de jure*.<sup>827</sup> While humans are *de jure* sanctified, they are not all as yet *de facto* sanctified in their own lives.<sup>828</sup> The movement from *de jure* to *de facto* entails a response on the part of the human.<sup>829</sup> As noted by Jeannine Graham, the human response to the sanctification worked in and through God, is recognition, obedience, and praise. This is not merely a cognitive event, but one which sets one's whole being in motion.<sup>830</sup> Barth writes:

We have not to achieve it by imitation. Even if we could do this – and we cannot – we should be too late; just as we should be far too late in any attempted creation of heaven and earth ... Similarly, our only option is to see and accept as an accomplished fact man's new form of existence, our sanctification, and to direct ourselves accordingly. He Himself has accomplished it in a way which is effective and authoritative for all, for His whole people and all its individual members, and ultimately for the whole world.<sup>831</sup>

In this selection we see most of what was detailed above: sanctification is not achieved by humans, but by God, and the human response to it is acceptance and obedience. Here we also find the closest Barth comes to explicitly including the nonhuman creation within his account of the sanctification achieved by God. God's achievement of sanctification is effective for all, and 'ultimately for the whole world.' Despite the fact that this is the sole place where the nonhuman features in Barth's account of sanctification, the logic of his theology includes them much more so. Sanctification is part of the greater project of redemption, which, as shown above, includes nonhuman animals. Likewise, as noted earlier, the enabling of humans

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<sup>825</sup> Barth *CD* IV/2, 499-503, 513. Here Barth states that with sanctification we are 'dealing with the being and action of God' (IV/2, 500), and that 'In the original and proper sense of the term, the Holy One who is the active Subject of sanctification.' (IV/2, 513)

<sup>826</sup> See also Graham, Jeannine Michele. *Representation and Substitution in the Atonement Theologies of Dorothee Sölle, John Macquarrie, and Karl Barth*. New York: Peter Lang, 2005, 306-13.

<sup>827</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/2, 511, 521; Graham, Jeannine Michele. *Representation and Substitution in the Atonement Theologies of Dorothee Sölle, John Macquarrie, and Karl Barth*. New York: Peter Lang, 2005, 310-13.

<sup>828</sup> Graham, *Representation and Substitution*, 310.

<sup>829</sup> In *CD* IV/2, 522-23, Barth also describes the movement from *de jure* to *de facto*, and suggests this sanctification of humans is a work of Holy Spirit which can be described as giving and receiving of direction.

<sup>830</sup> Graham, *Representation and Substitution*, 307-08.

<sup>831</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/2, 516-17.

to become the covenant partner means that not just humans, but the whole of creation is enabled to partake of the covenant. Thus though nonhuman animals are only explicitly included in Barth's discussions on sanctification minimally, nonhuman animals do have a place.

The way that Barth fails to treat the role of sanctification for humans with specific regards to nonhuman animals is surprising, given his broader theology examined above. Though I made the case that the theology of Barth certainly gives nonhuman animals a place within Barth's theology of sanctification, of becoming the creatures we are intended to be, merely stating that nonhuman animals will benefit from this somehow does not seem enough. Barth's theology provides a useful basis (linking sanctification with the salvation already achieved in Christ, and which includes nonhuman animals) for suggesting ways in which human sanctification might entail their relation to nonhuman creatures. Yet this is one area that is missing. What is needed is an account not only of how nonhuman animals feature, but how humans, through their calling of representation, can assist creation to attain their sanctification and become the creatures God intends for them to be. Again, this is an act which is already achieved by God, yet just as humans still have proper responses, so too must nonhuman animals. If sanctification 'involves a modification of [the human's] situation and constitution,'<sup>832</sup> this must also apply to the nonhuman. Given that the whole of creation is fallen, the whole of creation needs its situation and constitution modified such that it can be realigned to match what God intends. As to how this might apply to nonhuman animals, Barth seems to say very little beyond accepting that it does occur. Here perhaps the work of Maximus the Confessor can provide a way forward.

As shown in chapter 3, Maximus described how humans can increase in sanctification through overcoming the divisions that exist within creation, and that such a process necessarily involves the nonhuman creation. If we transfer Maximus' focus on a cosmically focused sanctification, led firstly by Christ and secondarily by humans, to the sufficient theological basis which Barth provides, it will give a constructive way of expanding Barth's use of sanctification to be inclusive of nonhuman animals. To begin with, alike to Barth, Maximus views redemption as achieved solely by God in the person of Christ.<sup>833</sup> In becoming human, God became the creature connected to the whole creaturely world such that the whole of creation could be made right. Maximus describes this as the overcoming of

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<sup>832</sup> Barth, *CD* IV/2, 502.

<sup>833</sup> Maximus, *Amb* 41, 1309D-1312A, 1313B.

various divisions found throughout creation, whereby God overcomes these divisions through the incarnation such that humans are then enabled to do the same.<sup>834</sup> Maximus states that such overcomings are completed in Christ, though such divisions must also be overcome by all humans. This is accomplished through gaining knowledge and acting on such knowledge, with regards to their own selves, their fellow humans, and the rest of creation around them.<sup>835</sup> By increasingly becoming more aware of God's will in and for the world, humans are able to do their part in increasing in sanctification (which indeed involves a modification of their situation and constitution), and fulfilling their calling of mediation and representation for the whole creation. With regard to nonhuman animals in particular, the overcoming of the second division implies working to improve both the relation of humans to nonhuman animals, as well as working towards the eschatologically peaceful cosmic images found within the Bible. Living in such a way that one improves one's relation to not only God and humanity, but also to the nonhuman creation is an essential part of living an increasingly sanctified life. Though Maximus describes this in a significantly different way than Barth, both theologians understand the human to be connected to the whole of creation, to have a calling to represent/mediate on behalf of God to creation and creation to God, and that the ultimate goal, as achieved in Christ, is the salvation of the cosmos. For both authors sanctification – becoming the creatures we are called to be – requires an extension beyond the human to include the nonhuman. While Barth does not describe how this might occur, Maximus' description is in line with Barth's theology regarding the human calling as responsible representative, involving prayer and ethics regarding nonhuman animals. Prayer to God about how we should treat the nonhuman creation, as well as prayer on behalf of creation to God, is a means of increasing in sanctification and enabling the nonhuman creation to do the same. Though Barth never mentions prayer with regards to how the human creature might include the nonhuman within their response to God's achieved sanctification, this, as well as the increasing ethical implications it will necessarily entail, would seem the natural outcome of the logic of Barth's broader theology.

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<sup>834</sup> Maximus, *Amb 41*, 1308D-1312A.

<sup>835</sup> Maximus, *Amb 41*, 1305C-1308C.

## Conclusion

This chapter made the case that understanding the unique human quality as representative, was critical for understanding God's motivation for becoming human. The first section argued that God's motivation for the incarnation more generally was due to God's will to covenant, and desire for a covenant partner. The importance of the centrality of Christ was noted, as well as the fact that it is only Christ as the Covenant Partner who enables any other creature to partake of the covenant. Next, the covenant partners were then addressed, and the roles of covenant partner and covenant attendant were differentiated and explored to show the part which both human and nonhuman animals have within the covenant. I argued in this section that Barth's theology quite explicitly makes space for the nonhuman creature within the covenantal relationship by giving them the position of attendants. Such attendants are not partners, but fully partake of all the covenant offers via the human partner. In making this case, I defended the writings of Barth against two theologians who claimed that Barth made little space for nonhuman animals within his account of the covenant.

The second section addressed the topic of representation, and argued that representation is a central concept for understanding humans as the covenant partner. Representation details how the unique human calling as covenant partner is made functional such that the attendant nonhuman animal population can partake of the covenant blessings. What representation is for Barth, and the central role of Jesus in expressing this were covered before turning to humans. Next I addressed what occurs in representation, with representation occurring both from God to creation, and from creation to God. Then, I touched upon the importance of understanding humans as having a divine responsibility, which opened up discussing the ethical implications which a theology of the human as the representative covenant partner entails, including prayer and the limits of any human authority over nonhuman animals. While Barth constructively suggested that humans can pray on behalf of creation as part of their ethical outworking, I demonstrated how Barth's ethical theology with regards to nonhuman animals was potentially problematic especially with regards to the ethical practices of vegetarianism. In turning to Barth's theology of sanctification in the third section, I argued that Barth's theology of sanctification, while generally lacking in the presence of the nonhuman, could accommodate them due to his broader theology expressed prior. The way to do so was highlighted using the work of Maximus the Confessor, which was used to show how some of Barth's own work regarding prayer and the ethical

importance of the nonhuman could provide a way forward. Despite his occasional failure in this regard, the broader theological picture which Barth presents is quite capable of not only suggesting sufficient answers as to why God became incarnate (to covenant with creation), and became human in particular (they are the creature willed to be the representative covenant partner), but also for providing a basis for entering into more specific questions as to how such an understanding of the human and their calling might impact on how humans treat nonhuman animals and work to bring sanctification to the rest of the created order.

## **Conclusion**

### **Review of Findings**

This dissertation was driven by two main questions: why did God become human in particular in the incarnation, and what are the implications of the humanity of Christ for understanding human and nonhuman relations. Through asking these questions, and the more general question of why God became incarnate, I examined a range of significant answers to these questions. Each chapter was based on one significant Christian figure and their particular answer: Anselm of Canterbury and human sin, Gregory of Nyssa and humans as made in the image of God, Maximus the Confessor and the microcosmic constitution of humanity, and finally Karl Barth and the human representational calling. Each of these authors were used to come to an increasingly definitive account of why God became human in particular in the incarnation, as well as what the ethical implications of such an act were. This account is expressed through the three theses I make in this dissertation: (1) that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human to include the nonhuman, (2) that God became human in particular due to the unique human calling as representative, and (3) that this calling of representation carries with it ethical implications for humans towards nonhuman animals.

### *Chapter 1*

In the first chapter I examined the writings of Anselm of Canterbury regarding his understanding that God's primary motivation for becoming incarnate as a human was to address the problem of human sin. The chapter proceeded through three sections. In the first, Anselm's cosmology was examined, with particular attention given to his theology of fittingness and beauty. In the second section, sin and the Fall were examined and I demonstrated that Anselm's understanding of the effects of sin (only affecting humans) was too restrictive, given his theology of truth. In the final section Anselm's understanding of the incarnation was addressed, and once more his presentation of the redemption brought about by the incarnation was shown to be overly restrictive. Yet again, I used Anselm's theology of truth to demonstrate that the goal of the incarnation and its redemption should be cosmic in extent, however his theology provided no means of explaining how such redemptive might be effective beyond the human species.



Answering the two driving questions provided evidence for the first of the theses. This chapter showed how motivation for the incarnation can be understood to be inclusive of both the human and the nonhuman creation. Since the beauty of God's creative project was upset by the fallenness of creation, God became incarnate to restore the beauty of the whole of creation. Yet why it was as a human that God became incarnate, and the implications this has for humans towards the nonhuman creation was still left unanswered. Since the whole of creation can be conceived of as fallen, then becoming human in particular for the redemption from sin does not give a sufficient answer to God's choice to become human.

The second of this thesis' driving questions was in a sense, answered by Anselm in the negative. Regarding the implications for human/nonhuman relationships based on the incarnation, Anselm simply does not conceive of how the incarnation has any implications for the nonhuman creation, nor for how humans might relate to it. I demonstrated how his theology of truth can be used to both extend the idea of fallenness to the whole of creation, and how the redemption brought about by the incarnation should be extended to the nonhuman creation. This illustrated that human and nonhuman creatures in some sense share in both fallenness and redemption. The logic of such a claim however, did not describe what the relation between human and nonhuman animal should be. Anselm's theology then, provided little with which to understand how the incarnation can be determinative for human/nonhuman relationships. Though certainly a necessary part of the answer, addressing sin does not provide an adequate account of why God became human in particular.

## *Chapter 2*

The second chapter, based around the writings of Gregory of Nyssa and his understanding of God's incarnation as significantly motivated by the human creation as images of God provided continued support for my first thesis, and also began support for the third. In the first section the broader question as to why God became incarnate was examined, and it was shown that Gregory, alike to Anselm, understood sin to be a significant motivation for God's incarnation. Gregory however, gives particular emphasis to the constitution of the human, especially their creation in the image of God. It is to restore this image, and the calling it entails, that motivated the incarnation. Like Anselm, Gregory does not appear to have understood the rest of creation to stand in need of redemption, yet despite this, I demonstrate how his theology (unlike Anselm's) suggests a way in which redemption might extend to the rest of creation through God's incarnation as a human. The second section

examined the nature of the image of God, and showed that Gregory had a range of concepts associated with it, including capacities such as rationality and freedom, as well as linked callings such as ruling and mirroring God. While Gregory understood each of these to be unique to humans, at the centre of his model of the image of God exists a connection with the rest of the earthly creation. The human soul for Gregory, entailing vegetative, sensible, and rational components, is suggestive of a direct connection between humans and nonhumans. This connection was more fully addressed in the third section where a range of ways in which humans share commonality with nonhuman creatures was examined.

In various ways, this chapter on Gregory and the image of God adds to the case for the first and third theses of the dissertation. Similarly to Anselm, Gregory's theology suggests that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human. While Gregory focuses primarily on the human, he also states that what the redemption brought about by the incarnation enables, is for humans to reach their calling of drawing all creation up to God. Though God's incarnation focused on restoring the human nature of images of God such that they could fulfill their calling of mirroring God, the inclusion of the nonhuman has as an explicit and repeated claim to being involved in the results. Such an achievement is made possible by the microcosmic connection between the human creature and the rest of creation. How this occurs, and what it entails for humans, Gregory does not explain. Therefore, although there certainly are ethical implications for humans towards sanctifying the nonhuman creation based on the incarnation and its redemption, Gregory leaves open what these might involve.

### *Chapter 3*

In the third chapter the human constitution as microcosm was examined in three sections through the writings of Maximus the Confessor in the continuing search of the dissertation for an answer to why God became human in particular. In the first I examined the creative cosmology of Maximus, giving particular attention to his *logoi* theology, his presentation of the human creature, and the entry of sin into the world. The *logoi* are divine ideas for all that exists, and provide both an ontological basis for everything, as well as an operative goal. In turning to the actual creatures themselves, I discussed the particular way Maximus conceives of the human, focusing specifically on their constitution as microcosm, and their calling as mediator. Here, I highlighted potential issues with understanding humans as uniquely microcosmic, and suggested that while they may certainly be microcosmic, their

claim to being uniquely so is questionable. It is this constitution and calling, however, which Christ takes up in the incarnation, and it is due to the human microcosmic nature that the incarnation is made effective for the whole of creation. This is essential, for unlike Anselm and Gregory, Maximus conceives of the whole of creation as fallen – as failing to live according to their *logoi* – and so in need of redemption. It is precisely for this reason that God becomes incarnate, with the end goal being the deification of all things. Deification was the topic of the third section, where I discussed Maximus' understanding of it as the ultimate goal of creation. Here again it is the whole of creation, human and nonhuman, that is understood to partake of deification. God's incarnation not only redeems a fallen creation, but also re-enables humans to work towards their calling of mediating for creation, ultimately sanctifying both themselves and the whole of creation. This work of sanctification was highlighted in both the second and third sections, for part of the human calling entails mediation on behalf of creation and enabling them to become their various *logoi*.

Alike to the second chapter, this one adds support for the first and third theses of the dissertation. The whole of this chapter demonstrates that Maximus' theology lends support to the idea that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human. From his *logoi* theology, to linking every creature with the Logos and acting as an end goal for each creature, to their redemption from the state of fallenness which they find themselves in, to the realisation of their *logoi* in the eschatological aim of deification which the incarnation makes possible, nonhuman animals feature as a part of the motivation for God's act in the incarnation. In turning to the third thesis, it is here that the ethical implications for the human regarding the nonhuman are made abundantly clear. Due to God's incarnation as a human, and the redemption he enables, it is now possible for humans to begin to live out their divine calling of mediating on behalf of the creation. Maximus' second mediation in particular lends strong support to the idea that the incarnation, and the nature in which God became incarnate, has significant implications for how humans are to understand their relation to the nonhuman creation. As Maximus understood it, it is as the microcosmic creature that humans have such a capacity to mediate on behalf of creation, and thus God's choice to become human. Yet, as I illustrated in the chapter, this claim of uniqueness is not as secure today as it would have been for Maximus, and indeed seems unlikely. Thus while Maximus' answer that the microcosmic constitution of humanity is descriptive of a necessary link between human and nonhuman, and that it is an important component of fully answering the question of why God

became human, it is still an insufficient one. Given the very real possibility of other creatures being microcosmic, another answer was still required.

#### *Chapter 4*

The final chapter examined the human calling as covenantal representatives within the theology of Karl Barth. In this chapter we finally achieve not just a necessary answer to understanding why God became human in the incarnation, but also one that is sufficient. Through answering the two driving questions, the three tenets of this dissertation are presented in their fullest. These were made in the chapter through three sections. In the first the topic of the covenant was examined. Here various ideas were detailed including the centrality of the covenant within Barth's incarnational theology, how the covenant is expressed in history, as well as the various members of the covenant. Both God and humans were shown to be covenant partners. Against Clough and Linzey however, I argued that Barth's theology explicitly includes nonhuman animals in the covenantal blessing through their position as attendants. Such inclusion is made possible through the human creature who has a calling as a covenantal partner and a representative within the covenant. The second section examined Barth's presentation of representation, including that of Christ and of humans, and demonstrated that God's choice to become human in particular, was such that his covenantal will for the whole of creation could be achieved through the representational human. Finally, in the third section I explored the implications for human/nonhuman relationships of the human calling as representative. While Barth's theology as a whole generally gives a surprising amount of attention and focus to the nonhuman creation, and the importance of treating them ethically, his theology is at times conflicted. With regards to his treatment of sanctification and the nonhuman animal, the nonhuman is nearly non-existent. Despite this, Barth's broader theology of valuing the nonhuman, when combined with the work of Maximus detailed in the third chapter, is capable of expressing ways in which the human calling to representation can be ethically lived out.

In this chapter the answers to the driving questions of the dissertation provide a thorough case of support for the three theses. Though the case for these three theses was partially built in the work of the preceding chapters, in the fourth they are most clearly expressed. God's motivation for becoming incarnate is to enable the covenant, and since nonhuman animals are included in the covenant, they are also included in the motivation. God's choice as a human in particular was shown to be due to their unique calling, a calling

of representation. With their connection to the whole of creation, humans are positioned by God to represent both the creation to God as well as representing God to creation. Such representation has significant implications as to how humans understand their relation to the nonhuman creation. Not only are they to speak on their behalf, but they are also to learn God's will for creation such that the whole of creation can have its sanctification fully realised. This calling to sanctify creation is enabled by prayer, whereby humans can speak on behalf of creation to God and also hear from God what His will is for creation. God's choice to become human in the incarnation then, speaks to more than His desire to redeem the fallen human creature, but more fully understood, also entails the redemption of the whole of creation and bespeaks a necessary relation of the human to the nonhuman. Barth's theology, with some amendments, provides an incredibly useful way of understanding God's will to become incarnate, and the effects it has on the whole of creation.

Each of the four chapters, therefore, contribute to the development of my overall argument. In Chapter 1 I demonstrated support for the first of my theses – that God's motivation for the incarnation extends beyond the human – through engaging with Anselm's cosmology and showing how the logic of his aesthetic cosmology, with the addition of a cosmic Fall, necessitates that the whole of God's project stands in need of redemption for God's will for creation to be achieved. Chapter 2 not only added to my first thesis through interaction with Gregory's idea that God's incarnation was motivated such that all creation could be drawn up to God, but additionally provided initial evidence for my third thesis – that there is an ethical calling on the part of humans due to the unique calling – for humans are to sanctify creation due to their microcosmic connection with it. Chapter 3 added to my first and third theses by using Maximus' *logoi* theology to detail the cosmic scope of God's redemptive plans brought about by the incarnation, and showing how Maximus' mediation theology places a significant role for the human with regards to the sanctification of creation. Finally, in Chapter 4 I provide support for each of my three theses by describing how God's covenantal plans are inclusive of all creation, how in the human role as representative a sufficient answer to why God became human in particular is found, and how this role necessitates an ethical expression through how humans treat the nonhuman creation.

## Potential Concerns

Such an account of the incarnation and the particular role of the human creature as creaturely representative carries with it the potential for concerns, especially with regards to how the particularity of God's choice, and the resulting calling, are expressed. One concern which may lie in understanding the human creature microcosmic is that they may be understood as subsuming the whole of creation into themselves, leaving little concern for the rest of creation. When this view is taken, then the human can become normative for creaturely existence, or be understood as the pinnacle of creatures or the best of creatures. If humans are truly microcosmic, and every element of the created world is found within them, then this can lead to a rejection of the rest of creation as of redemptive concern, since saving humans would result in a cosmos of sorts being saved. However, such an understanding runs counter to what one finds within the theology of Maximus, where the human's microcosmic constitution is such that the whole of creation – each and every individual *logoi* and not only the human – can be redeemed.<sup>836</sup> Even if this particular view is not taken, it can still lead to troublesome issues entailing a creaturely hierarchy; if humans have such a central role within creation in being representatives, then the concern exists of viewing them as of more importance, or of the most importance. There are two ways of answering this concerns, both of which ultimately end up with the same practical expression of what it means to be human. First, there is no need to jump from a special calling for humans, to suggesting they are the most special creature. Logically, these two claims do not necessarily follow. Even Barth, who took a rather high view of the human creature (due to God's will to become human), suggested with regards to nonhuman animals that 'for all we know, their glory may well be the greater.'<sup>837</sup> Thus just because God became human, and humans have a special calling within creation, does not necessarily indicate they are somehow superior to their fellow creatures. Yet if there was a desire to suggest that humans might not only have a unique role within creation, but also possess a uniquely higher glory as a result, fears that such a higher station would condone mistreatment of other groups are unfounded (at least via the theology) due to what such a 'higher' placement within a hierarchy of creation entails. Even if one wished to push the idea of a human superiority based on their unique calling, such superiority can only be understood through the revelation of what it means to be the higher creature. In Jesus Christ who is the king who came not to be served, but to serve, we see the model of

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<sup>836</sup> See Chapter 3, section 1, especially 119-126, for Maximus' understanding of the *logoi*.

<sup>837</sup> Barth, *CD III/2*, 138.

what it means to be one with a “higher” position. Ideas of domination or the like, are not only completely contrary to the model of Jesus, but also contrary to all of the ideas examined regarding the role of representing as detailed above – to speak on behalf of another creature – on their behalf, not to silence them such that their desires are not communicated nor met. To use one’s role as representative to serve oneself, rather than enabling creation to reach God’s purposes for it, is to not only fail as a representative, but actually works against this calling.

A second, and related concern, can be found within the field of feminist theology, where the particularity of God’s incarnation as not just a human, but as a male human, has been a topic of some discussion. Here the concerns are broadly ordered around the idea that it is the male human which is normative for what it means to be human, and the resulting implications that this has for what it means to be male or female (e.g. it is the male human who is truly microcosmic, or is able to act as representative, while the female is incapable). This is a topic of interest for if, as I claim within this dissertation, there is theological reason for focusing on the particularity of God’s choice to become human, then the question arises if there is also significance attached to God’s choice to become a *male* human. Nicola Slee notes a number of concerns regarding theodicy – of God choosing to become incarnate in such a way that allowed and supported the potential for androcentrism and sexism.<sup>838</sup> Kathryn Greene-McCreight suggests that if Jesus is used as model, women are not empowered to claim their own identity for Jesus was male and not female.<sup>839</sup> Similarly, Rosemary Radford Ruether suggests that God’s incarnation as a male means that females are unable to (or have historically not been allowed to) represent God.<sup>840</sup> Taking a step back from the incarnation itself to its presence within scripture, Greene-McCreight also states that women have been excluded from the Christian canon, for the Bible was both written and collected by men.<sup>841</sup> Many of these concerns can be summed in the phrase ‘the scandal of particularity’ – the scandal brought about by the claim that the infinite God became incarnate in the single human male person of Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>842</sup> While some such as Daly feel there

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<sup>838</sup> Slee, Nicola. *Faith and Feminism: An Introduction to Feminist Theology*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2003, 51.

<sup>839</sup> Greene-McCreight, Kathryn. *Reconstructions of Christian Doctrine: Narrative Analysis and Appraisal*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 71.

<sup>840</sup> Radford Ruether, Rosemary. *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology*. London: SCM Press, 2002, 105-06.

<sup>841</sup> Greene-McCreight, *Reconstructions*, 71.

<sup>842</sup> Rigby, Cynthia L. ‘Scandalous Presence: Incarnation and Trinity’ in *Feminist and Womanist Essays in Reformed Dogmatics*, edited by Amy Plantinga Pauw, and Serene Jones, 58-74. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

is little means by which Christianity can be redeemed from within,<sup>843</sup> there are others who suggest a variety of techniques for doing so.

The first set of ways of operating within the Christian tradition are either to work with reconstruction of the Christian tradition, or with approaching the incarnation and Christology more generally in an alternative way. Reconstruction offers a reading of the Bible or traditional accounts which show that feminist criticisms are not well founded, and that classical Christianity is not a threat to women.<sup>844</sup> This can be done in two ways. One is by offering an internal apology of what the Christian Bible/tradition claims about the incarnation, and suggesting that some of the feminist concerns are not well-founded, or by reinterpreting the traditional symbols and formulas by using female language and models.<sup>845</sup> Here, the use of androgynous Christologies are often used, where Christ is representative of both male and female, and in him both male and female are redeemed. Support is commonly found through both the Bible from Galatians 3:28 ('There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.'), and the mystical tradition.<sup>846</sup> The second is by the use of doctrinal relocation, which operates by putting less focus on the incarnation, and more on other areas such as divine creation.<sup>847</sup> Through turning to other doctrinal topics, the focus is less narratively driven, and offers a more universal reading of the incarnation than would otherwise be available.

The second way of approaching the incarnation from a feminist standpoint is through the use of alternative Christologies or approaches. Such approaches generally operate within the Christian tradition, but are less tied to traditional readings or understandings of the person of Jesus Christ. Two main ways in which this is done are through message Christologies and the use of the Spirit or Mary as a complementary female figure.<sup>848</sup> Message Christologies are rooted in the acts and teachings of Jesus, and often reject the idea of Christ as a central figure described in 'masculine' terms such as Messiah, or divine Logos.<sup>849</sup> This is in contrast to the

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<sup>843</sup> Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 69-97. Indeed, Daly refers to the idea of the hypostatic union as a 'cosmic joke' (73), and the role of Jesus as saviour as one he was 'condemned to' by the tradition (96).

<sup>844</sup> Greene-McCreight, *Reconstructions*, 77-79.

<sup>845</sup> Slee, *Faith and Feminism*, 54.

<sup>846</sup> Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 107.

<sup>847</sup> Greene-McCreight, *Reconstructions*, 80-82.

<sup>848</sup> Other approaches are relational Christologies, which understand Christ as an erotic power found primarily wherever right relationship exists (not necessarily or primarily in Jesus), and womanist Christologies, where Jesus is understood as co-sufferer, healer, and provider (Slee, *Faith and Feminism*, 57).

<sup>849</sup> Slee, *Faith and Feminism*, 55; Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 114.



use of the Spirit or Mary as a female figure, where emphasis is placed on what they can offer towards a fuller theology where both male and female have a significant model.<sup>850</sup>

Of these various responses to the ‘scandal of particularity’ of God becoming human in the male person of Jesus of Nazareth, this dissertation follows most closely along the lines of the first type examined, that of reconstruction of the Christian tradition, and understanding Jesus as representative of both male and female, alike to androgynous Christologies. While affirming that God did indeed will to become human in the individual male person of Jesus of Nazareth, I hold that such a choice of sex does not hold soteriological significance. Maximus’ theology of Christ overcoming the five divisions in creation is a useful expression of how this can be understood. As made clear above, each and every creature, and every created part of all creatures – the various *logoi* – are made by God and good. Thus to be male or female is good. At the same time, Maximus writes that in overcoming the *division* between male and female, Christ addresses our misuse of our created natures:

He united us in himself by removing the difference between male and female, and instead of men and women, in whom above all this manner of division is beheld, he showed us as properly and truly to be simply human beings, thoroughly transfigured in accordance with him, and bearing his intact and completely unadulterated image.

What we become through Christ, is being made like Christ, and that is not a person who is primarily identified by their gender, but by being human. Again, this is not to deny our creaturely particularities – Maximus’ *logoi* theology affirms creaturely differences and particularities, as indeed does the fact that God became particular in the Jewish male person of Jesus over 2000 years ago. As Cynthia Rigby notes, recognising the scandal of particularity leads to ‘valu[ing] all people with their varying particularities’, and that ‘God’s scandalous presence with us has an “equalizing impact,” condemning our attempts to lord over others and inviting us to live in solidarity with one another, even as God lives in solidarity with us.’<sup>851</sup> Given this, the past uses of the incarnation within Christian history to support androcentric or sexist approaches which feminist theology calls into question, are seen to be misguided attempts at both understanding the incarnation and living out the implications of it. God’s humanity affirms both male and female, and it is through the person

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<sup>850</sup> Slee, *Faith and Feminism*, 53; Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 107. Radford Ruether (107) rejects the use of Mary as a complementary female figure as her value is seen to be derived from that of Jesus.

<sup>851</sup> Rigby, ‘Scandalous Presence’, 72-73.

of Jesus Christ that all humans, and indeed all creatures, can become fully the creatures they were made to be.

### **Implications for Theology**

Given the three theses I demonstrated in this dissertation, there are certain implications for those doing future work in similar fields. First, as this dissertation demonstrates, there are significant impacts created when the topic of the nonhuman is included in our theologies. Attending to these assists in finding areas where errors may have long lay unnoticed, and enables a more robust theological account. This dissertation revealed the need to attend to the nonhuman in theological accounts of the incarnation, but hopefully also demonstrates that this is a practice with implications beyond the incarnation. Aside from the value of the nonhuman which this dissertation explained, it also proved the value, and indeed the need, to consider the implications which the inclusion of the nonhuman has for Christian theologies. Even for those with no particular interest in the moral value of the nonhuman, including the nonhuman creature in Christian thoughts on God and the wide range of Christian doctrines and topics, enables more robust and substantial theologies. Any standard systematic theology should ensure that it attends adequately to the nonhuman creation. For example, while this thesis focused on the incarnation, the related topics of atonement and redemption were also touched upon briefly. A focused inclusion of the nonhuman creation within doctrinal accounts of these topics would likewise provide for deeper renditions of these subjects. For instance, being aware of the fallen (though not necessarily sinful) nonhuman creation has implications for how reconciliation is understood and expressed, regardless of the particular atonement theory one takes.

Another example of an area which could benefit from an explicit awareness of the implications of the nonhuman animal is theological anthropology. If the human is the creature willed by God to be the representative creature, this will impact how we treat our fellow creatures and also how we understand ourselves. Though our relation to nonhuman animals should never supersede our relation to God, our relation to God and our understanding of who the human is in relation to God can, and should, have implications for how we understand ourselves in relation to other creatures. If the human is to be defined not just by our relation to God and to our fellow humanity, but also our relation and responsibility towards the nonhuman creation, then how we understand ourselves will also be significantly impacted.

Recent works on theological anthropology show that there is still work to be done in addressing the nonhuman within. Marc Corzac's *Theological Anthropology* for instance, while noting the value of the nonhuman more generally, does not claim any implications of the incarnation for the nonhuman creation (beyond claiming that physicality is in some sense good because God became physically embodied), nor what implications the doctrine of the incarnation might have for understanding our relationship to the nonhuman.<sup>852</sup> Ray Anderson's essay 'Theological Anthropology', while noting that humans share *nephesh* (soul) and *ruach* (spirit) with nonhuman animals, mentions no implications which the incarnation of God has for understanding what it means to be human in relation to the nonhuman creation.<sup>853</sup> Likewise David Kelsey in both his essay 'The Human Creature', and his book *Eccentric Existence: A Theological Anthropology*, makes no mention of the human relation to the nonhuman creation as a necessary aspect of understanding who and what the human creature is.<sup>854</sup> If humans have a theologically significant relationship with nonhuman animals, then such a relationship needs to be accounted for in future explanations of what it means to be human.

In addition, this thesis revealed that many of the common ways of distinguishing between human and nonhuman are theologically untenable, especially when they are used to position the nonhuman as somehow creatures unworthy of theological and ethical concern. This is not to say that there are no distinctions between human and nonhuman creatures; this dissertation suggested one such major distinction. Rather, it is to highlight that many of the ways Christian theology differentiates between human and nonhuman (e.g. as fallen, or as of divine redemptive concern) need to be seriously reconsidered or outright abandoned. Instead, any differentiations which may (or may not) be found to exist are to be noted as ones which run alongside, rather than against, the understanding of nonhuman animals as creatures valued by God with a worth that is based on God's will, rather than on their use to humans.

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<sup>852</sup> Cortez, Marc. *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: T & T Clark International, 2010, 39, 71.

<sup>853</sup> Anderson, Ray. 'Theological Anthropology.' In *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*, edited by Gareth Jones, 82-94. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004.

<sup>854</sup> Kelsey, David H. 'The Human Creature.' In *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, edited by Kathryn Tanner, John Webster, and Iain Torrance, 121-39. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007; Kelsey, David, H. *Eccentric Existence: A Theological Anthropology* Vol. 1-2. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009. The closest Kelsey gets is through his discussion of the 'quotidian', which is the world in which humans live (190), yet here there is not detail regarding nonhuman animals specifically.

## Moving Forward

Throughout this thesis I endeavored to examine as thoroughly as possible a range of answers as to why God became human, and the implications this has for better understanding the incarnation, the human, and their relation to the nonhuman creation. Despite this, there are a number of areas and topics which were either examined in less detail than they otherwise might warrant, or were not examined at all, due to lack of space. Two areas that are worthy of further study based on the work done in this thesis are (1) studying other biblical ways in which humans relate to nonhuman animals and the impact the calling of representation has on them, and (2) making use of a more systematic and detailed approach to the ethical implications of the human calling of representation for nonhuman creatures.

In this dissertation I discussed the human calling and how it entails an ethical relationship with the nonhuman creation. Yet the Bible is descriptive of other ways humans relate to nonhuman animals that are worthy of study. The topic of human dominion, taken from Genesis 1, has been discussed repeatedly with regards to image of God studies, especially from the 1960s onward.<sup>855</sup> This interpretation of the image of God understands it to be expressed most fully in the human capacity and calling to have dominion, or rule, within creation. Such an interpretation can either suggest that just as God has absolute authority over the cosmos, so too does He give humans absolute authority over their earthly realm, or it can mean that humans are to rule precisely as God illustrates his own rule through the life of Christ, the king who came to serve. The idea of ruling was noted within the chapter on Gregory of Nyssa, yet due to the limited amount he discusses this particular notion, it was not examined in detail. Despite this, if we can understand the human as the representational creature, representing God to creation and creation to God, then this would suggest ways of understanding such a functional interpretation of the image of God, whereby humans (at least in part) image God by representing Him to creation. As Daniel Weiss has recently suggested, understanding humans as representative rulers within creation has a direct impact on our understanding of the nonhuman animal ‘subjects’ of such rule.<sup>856</sup> The concept of dominion then, when approached with the appreciation of human calling that this dissertation suggests, offers support in seeking to read the Genesis narrative in a way which values the nonhuman animal creation. Through combining the nature and calling of humanity which this

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<sup>855</sup> Herring, Stephen. ‘A “Transubstantiated” Humanity: The Relationship between the Divine Image and the Presence of God in Genesis i 26f.’ *Vetus Testamentum* 58 (2008) 480.

<sup>856</sup> Weiss, Daniel. ‘Animals as Human(ised) Political Subjects in Genesis 1.’ Paper presented at Negotiating Human/Animal Boundaries in Jewish and Christian Tradition symposium held in Cambridge, April 24, 2012.

dissertation described based on the incarnation, with interpretations of the human calling to dominion, a richer understanding of the human creature and its relation to the rest of creation is possible.

An additional area worthy of more examination is gaining a better understanding of the ethical implications of the human calling to representation towards the nonhuman realm. While I suggested ways that this may be lived out (e.g. prayer), I primarily focused on providing a basis on which claims towards a necessary ethical approach to the nonhuman can be founded. What I have not done, is provide a deeper understanding of how humans can ethically respond to the nonhuman creation in light of their representational calling. Given that humans are to represent nonhuman creatures to God means that nonhuman animals are subjects in their own right, and we are to represent their case. What that case may be needs further study. Throughout this dissertation I operated on the understanding that all creation is fallen, and therefore does not exist as God intends. If this was not the case, we could simply examine the nature of the nonhuman creation and work towards offering what most suits them, e.g. giving the vegetarians more vegetables and the carnivores more meat. Yet if creation is fallen, then we cannot merely look to the creature to understand how it should be living. If, as Isaiah 11 and 65 seem to suggest, the ‘lionness’ is not to be located in the lion’s capacity to kill, then work needs to be done to ascertain how to we are understand such a creature, and how, given its current nature to consume other creatures, we might represent and respond to its needs.

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